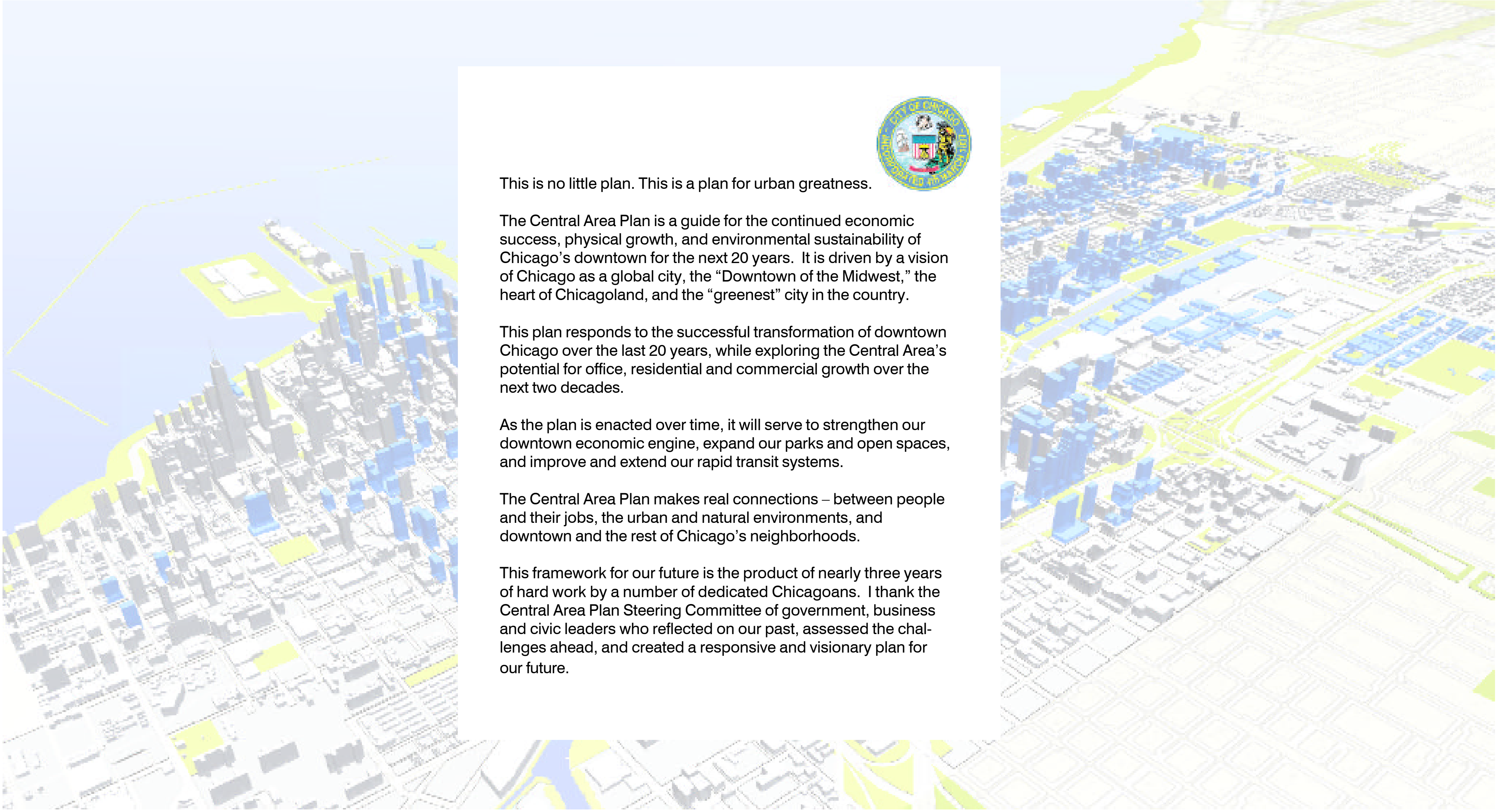
The Chicago Central Area Plan

Preparing the Central City for the 21st Century

Draft Final Report to the Chicago Plan Commission

May 2003



This is no little plan. This is a plan for urban greatness.

The Central Area Plan is a guide for the continued economic success, physical growth, and environmental sustainability of Chicago’s downtown for the next 20 years. It is driven by a vision of Chicago as a global city, the “Downtown of the Midwest,” the heart of Chicagoland, and the “greenest” city in the country.

This plan responds to the successful transformation of downtown Chicago over the last 20 years, while exploring the Central Area’s potential for office, residential and commercial growth over the next two decades.

As the plan is enacted over time, it will serve to strengthen our downtown economic engine, expand our parks and open spaces, and improve and extend our rapid transit systems.

The Central Area Plan makes real connections – between people and their jobs, the urban and natural environments, and downtown and the rest of Chicago’s neighborhoods.

This framework for our future is the product of nearly three years of hard work by a number of dedicated Chicagoans. I thank the Central Area Plan Steering Committee of government, business and civic leaders who reflected on our past, assessed the challenges ahead, and created a responsive and visionary plan for our future.

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May 2003

Prepared by
The City of Chicago
  Department of Planning and Development
  Department of Transportation
  Department of Environment

Preface

This is no little plan. This is a plan for urban greatness, as measured by the pride, prosperity and quality of life of Chicago's people. This is a plan to expand downtown's economic engine, which generates revenue for civic improvements in every ward and jobs to support families in every neighborhood. This is a green plan to enhance the state's fastest growing residential community and the metropolitan region's shared cultural treasures. This is a plan that advances Chicago’s historic commitment to build the world's greatest city. This is no little plan.

Only two of America's big cities enjoy the benefits of having commerce concentrated downtown, but only Chicago has room to grow. And grow it shall, as the City in a Garden remains a work in progress. Chicago has historically and uniquely fused the green of environmental enhancement with the aesthetic of architectural statement, to create a central area that invites all its people to come together as one to work, shop, live and play.

Growth means "more," and more needs managing. Managing more commuters, more buildings, more residences, more visitors. At this huge scale good management requires bold ideas brilliantly executed. Doing this kind of confident, visionary city-building for the benefit of all our people has exemplified the spirit of Chicago in each of its preceding five generations.

This generation faces a moment of destiny in which we shall either stride boldly to the forefront of the world's great cities, or begin an inexorable decline into the company of the also-rans. Ultimately we will measure our success in the health and happiness of life in the neighborhoods, one family at a time. But let us be clear that it is a healthy, vital and prospering central area that provides a necessary economic underpinning for our aspirations.

We believe that the people of Chicago take pride in their downtown. Indeed, we believe that they love it. This is a plan for them, for us. It is a plan that captures and leverages Chicago's emerging leadership across a broad front of city-building initiatives. This is no dream, but a blueprint. This is not a concept, but an inventory of specifics to be executed over time.

This is no little plan. Let's go build Chicago together, as we have always done - according to plan.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary i
CHICAGO'S CENTRAL AREA IN 2020

Chapter 1 1
GREAT PLANS FOR A GREAT CITY

Chapter 2 9
THE PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Physical Features of the Central Area 11

Economic Assessment and Sector Analyses 15

Opportunities for Growth 31

Chapter 3 33
VISION AND GUIDING THEMES

The Vision 35

The Guiding Themes 37

Green Chicago: A Commitment to the Environment 39

Chapter 4 41
THE PLAN

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 44

TRANSPORTATION 55
Transit
The Pedestrian Environment
Traffic and Parking
Alternative Modes of Transportation
Regional Transportation Projects

WATERFRONTS AND OPEN SPACES 79

The Lakefront
The Chicago Riverfront
Neighborhood Parks and Plazas
Green Streets and Infrastructure

Chapter 5 109
DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

THE EXPANDED LOOP 113

THE NEAR NORTH 121

THE SOUTH LOOP AND THE NEAR SOUTH SIDE 125

Chapter 6 137
IMPLEMENTATION

Overview
Implementation Tools
Development Controls
Transportation
Open Space
Environmental Committment

Appendix 1: Task Force Summaries 147

Acknowledgments and List of Illustrations 155

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chicago’s Central Area in 2020

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Chicago's Central Area in 2020

The Vision

Chicago's Central Area in 2020 will be known worldwide as a beautiful, dynamic urban center that is the hub of business, higher education and culture for its region. It will have the greenest downtown in America, known for its outstanding lake and riverfront, parks and greenways, its exceptional public transportation, and for its policies promoting innovative architecture and environmentally-sustainable design and practices. It will be a vibrant, walkable, place where people work, live, play and celebrate. It will attract and serve people from every Chicago neighborhood, as well as visitors from around the nation and the world.

A Guide to Growth

Central Chicago is poised for dramatic growth with billions of dollars in economic benefits to the city, region and state. This growth, which is good for the city and smart for the region, can only be sustained if the Central Area builds on the special qualities that make it one of the world's greatest places to work, live and play. This plan is designed to guide this growth, taking advantage of the Central Area's strengths: its economic diversity, its central location, and its renowned quality of life.

Building on Success

The hub of a great region

Chicago will maintain its position as the vibrant business and transportation center of the Midwest, by concentrating growth in an expanded downtown commercial core, and continually improving transportation systems. Downtown growth benefits the region by maximizing return on infrastructure investment, and minimizing costly sprawl.

Business success depends on quality of life

Good planning is good business. The Central Area's vibrant mix of uses, transportation, walkable neighborhoods, open spaces, waterfronts, and design excellence, will continue to make downtown Chicago a great place to do business.

The best of the past is the foundation for the future

Building on Chicago's legacy of exceptional architecture and spectacular parks means preserving landmark buildings and districts, enhancing the lakefront and riverfront, creating new parks, and encouraging innovative new design that respects people and contributes to great street life.

Downtown is everyone's neighborhood

Downtown, one of the world's great urban places, belongs first and foremost to the people of Chicago. People from all neighborhoods and all walks of life will come together here to work, play, access services, shop, learn, and celebrate their rich cultural traditions.

A green city is a healthy city

Chicago will be the international model of a sustainable city. Its commitment to transit first, use of renewable power and green technologies, smart energy management, environmentally-sound building design, and attention to its open spaces and waterfronts, will make it the greenest city in America.

Extraordinary growth in every sector

The growth envisioned in this plan will bring more than $534 billion in economic benefits to the Chicago metropolitan area, with huge increases in tax revenues to the city and state. This growth will occur in all sectors throughout the Central Area.

The Economic Engine

Chicago is America's only big city that has room to grow its downtown commercial core. Downtown will attract more than 180,000 new jobs by 2020 - double the number of jobs presently in suburban Schaumburg, and equivalent to eight new Sears Towers.

Quality Living

By 2020, more than 140,000 residents will live in the Central Area – that's like adding the current population of Evanston, and represents a 69% increase. New development and adaptive reuse of existing buildings will lead to more than 36,000 new dwellings. Public and health care facilities will also expand to serve this growth.

Tourism and Culture

By 2020, 35 million conventioneers, tourists and other visitors will visit the Central Area annually. New attractions will include an expanded McCormick Place and more than 160,000 square feet of expanded museum and cultural facilities. Ten thousand new hotel rooms will be added to accommodate these additional visitors.

A Place to Learn: Higher Education

More than 95,000 students will attend the Central Area's institutions of higher learning by 2020. The addition of more than 3 million square feet of new classroom, dormitory and administrative space will enhance the vibrant mix of Central Area experiences.

The Marketplace: Retail

More residents, workers and visitors mean many more people shopping. By 2020 there will be more than more than 7 million square feet of new retail space in the Central Area. Although this will be mainly in lower floors of larger, mixed use buildings, some exclusively retail buildings may also be developed along State Street, Michigan Avenue, or Roosevelt and Canal.

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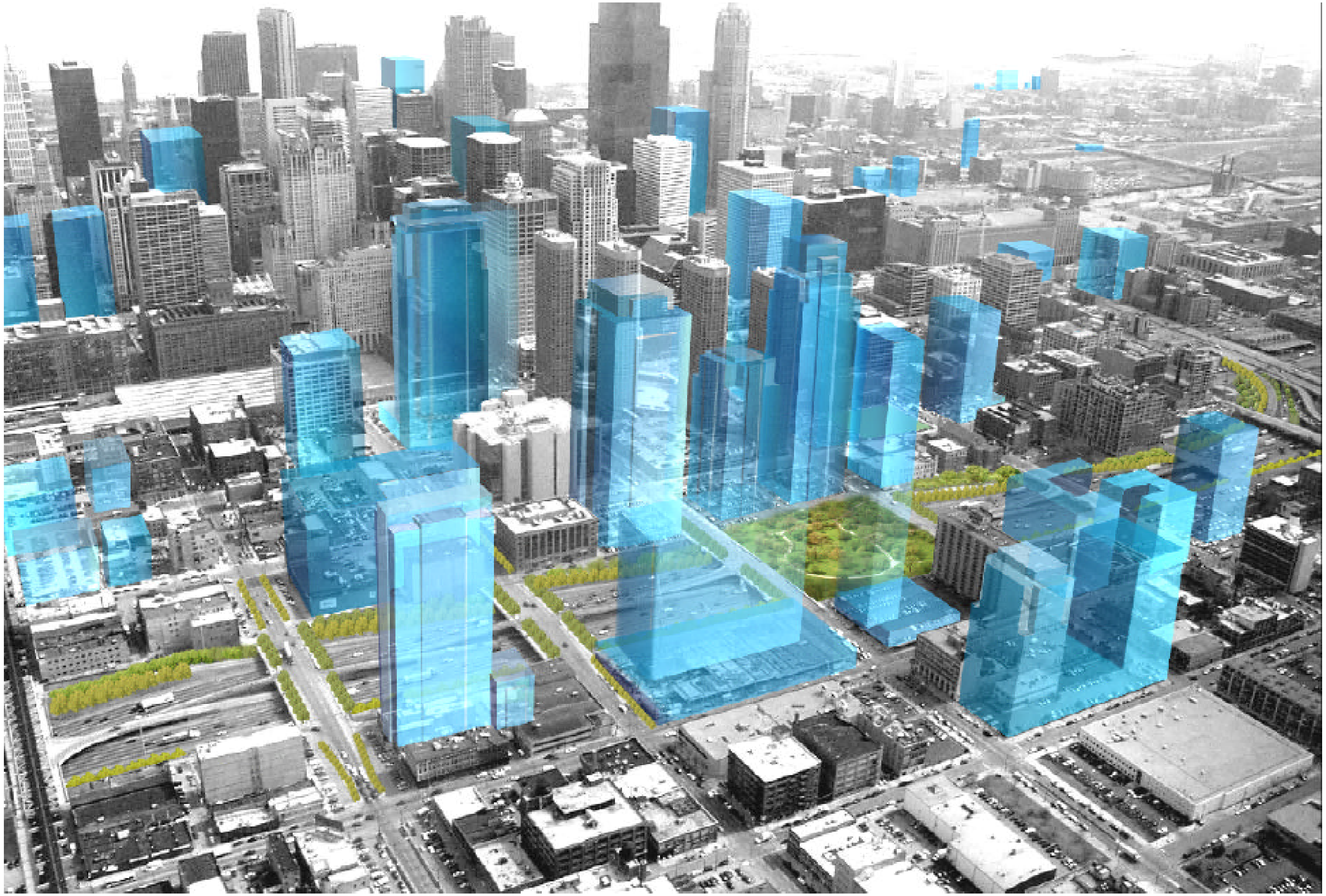

Figure i
In 2020 Chicago will have an expanded central business district framed by green civic gateways including a park over the Kennedy Expressway.

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The Guiding Themes

Extraordinary growth requires extraordinary planning. The pace of business and residential development in the last two decades demonstrates that people want to be in the Central Area. This plan is designed to bring even more jobs and residents in the next 20 years.

Three guiding themes organize this plan:

Theme 1 - Development Framework
Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant and diverse mixed-use urban districts.

- Extend the highest density office core into the West Loop around transit stations, services and the Chicago River
- Develop high-density, mixed-use corridors which extend from the expanded Loop and are linked to transit
- Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places
- Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage
- Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts
- Direct the growth of the Central Area's educational institutions and provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

Theme 2 - Transportation
Strengthen connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around.

- Make transit the first choice for people coming to the Central Area
- Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment
- Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock
- Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis
- Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.
- Improve national and international connections.

Theme 3 - *Waterfronts and Open Spaces*
Expand and connect waterfronts and open spaces to create great public places.

- Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

Connections for Successful Growth

To build on the qualities that make Central Chicago one of the best places in the world to do business, work, live, play, and learn, this plan emphasizes the connections between its three guiding themes. Connections mean that development, transportation, open space, and growth all build upon and support each other.

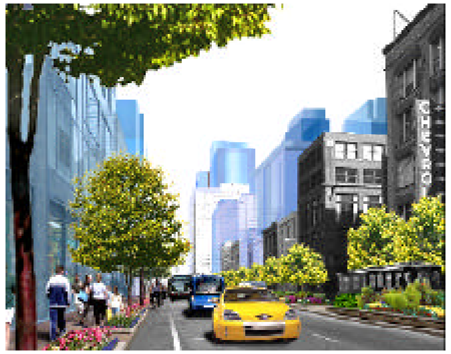
PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS
People from all parts of the region, the nation and the world will reach the Central Area easily, and move rapidly between its different districts. The plan envisions a city where people will be able to walk or bicycle along the waterfront all the way from Chinatown to North Avenue Beach. Chicago's workforce will be educated near centers of employment, and workers can choose to live near their jobs or reach them easily by public transit.

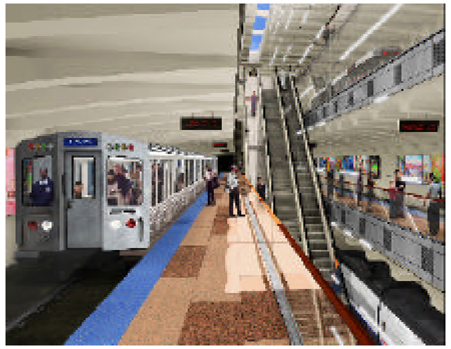
CONNECTING PEOPLE
The Central Area is a meeting place for people from all over Chicagoland, the nation and the world. It is the heart of a vibrant region, and one of the world's great crossroads. This plan is designed to keep Chicago connected to the world as a center of the global economy with an internationally-renowned quality of life.

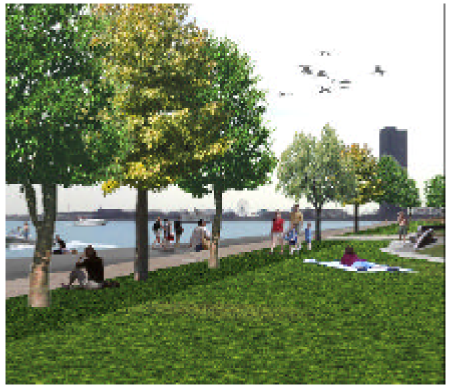
The Plan

The following document is organized in 6 chapters.

- Chapters 1 and 2 provide background information about the context for planning and the process, and provide a detailed economic and physical assessment of the Central Area.
- Chapter 3 lays out the vision and three guiding themes of the plan, and sets the stage for Chicago to become the greenest city in America.
- Chapter 4 provides detail on the plan's three guiding themes: Development Framework; Transportation; and Waterfronts and Open Spaces.
- Chapter 5 outlines specific recommendations for the three major districts: the Expanded Loop; the South Loop and Near South; and the Near North. This chapter shows how the vision and guiding themes will shape these geographic areas.
- Chapter 6 outlines implementation strategies.
- Detailed recommendations from task forces on specific issues are included in an appendix.







CHAPTER 1

Great Plans for a Great City

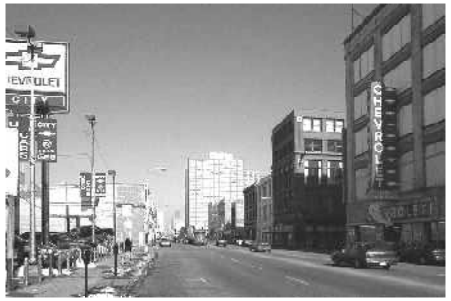


Figure 1.1
South Michigan Avenue today

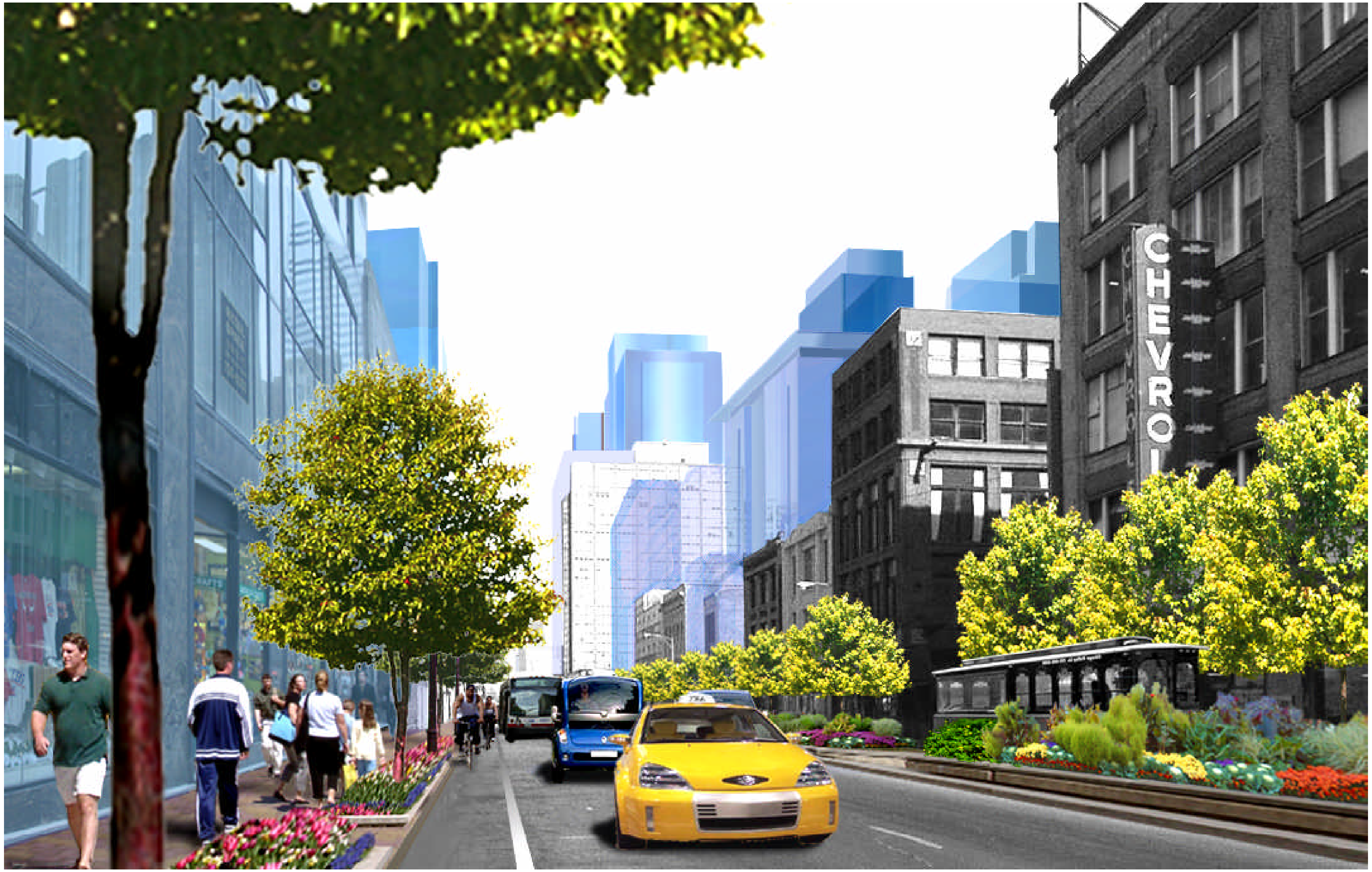


Figure 1.2
South Michigan Avenue will be one of many higher intensity, mixed-use corridors that will extend out from the Loop and form the centers of urban neighborhoods.

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Great Plans for a Great City

This is an extraordinary time for Chicago's Central Area. Under the leadership of Mayor Richard M. Daley, Chicago's Central Area is experiencing dramatic growth. It is a turnaround based on the principle that successful downtowns must be dynamic and people friendly places. This transformation will continue in the coming decades, only if we carefully plan today with a vision that supports best practices and ensures Chicago's quality of life.

Three Reasons to Expect Growth

The 43.5 million square feet of new office space constructed in downtown Chicago between 1980 and 2002 was equivalent to the entire metropolitan inventory of Phoenix or St. Louis. Chicago's underlying economic strength suggests that the pace of growth will continue. The city that began as the hub of the nation's inland waterways, then became its principal hub for the railroads and then the airlines, is now a hub for the nation's fiber optic network. As a hub, Chicago remains an excellent place to do business. Although fluctuations have occurred from year to year, the city's commercial core has grown at a remarkable pace since 1980, adding 43.5 million square feet of office space. With thoughtful planning and judicious public investment there is every reason to expect sustained growth.

The second reason to expect growth is Chicago's central location and economic diversity. Today, the Central Area is a diverse mix of office towers, residential districts, world famous shopping, convention centers, entertainment, tourism, and industry. This diversity, and a mid-continent location, has kept the Central Area, and the Chicago Region, strong in increasingly competitive national and international markets where quality is key.

Finally, Chicago's Central Area will grow because people want to be here. Since 1980, more than 23,000 new homes meant the Chicago added more downtown residents than any other American city. People from around the region, nation and the globe will continue to make business, career and life decisions that enable them to be here.

The Purpose of the Plan

The Central Area Plan is the City of Chicago's response to the continuing transformation of central Chicago. It details the Central Area's potential as well as the obstacles to growth, and provides a blueprint for essential change. It crafts this vision with a "greener", more environmentally sustainable Central Area as an overarching theme.

To a greater degree than perhaps any other U.S. city, Chicago has benefited from an enlightened planning partnership between the public and private sectors. Burnham and Bennett's famous 1909 Plan of Chicago began the transformation of Chicago from "hog butcher to the world" to a city with international standing for the quality of its civic realm. Subsequent plans have been as important in creating some of the most admired features of the city we know today.

This Plan is offered in the same spirit. A great deal has been accomplished, but there is much more work to be done if the Central Area's growth, quality of life, and commitment to preserving the best of its history are to be maintained and balanced. This Plan is the next step in Chicago's future.

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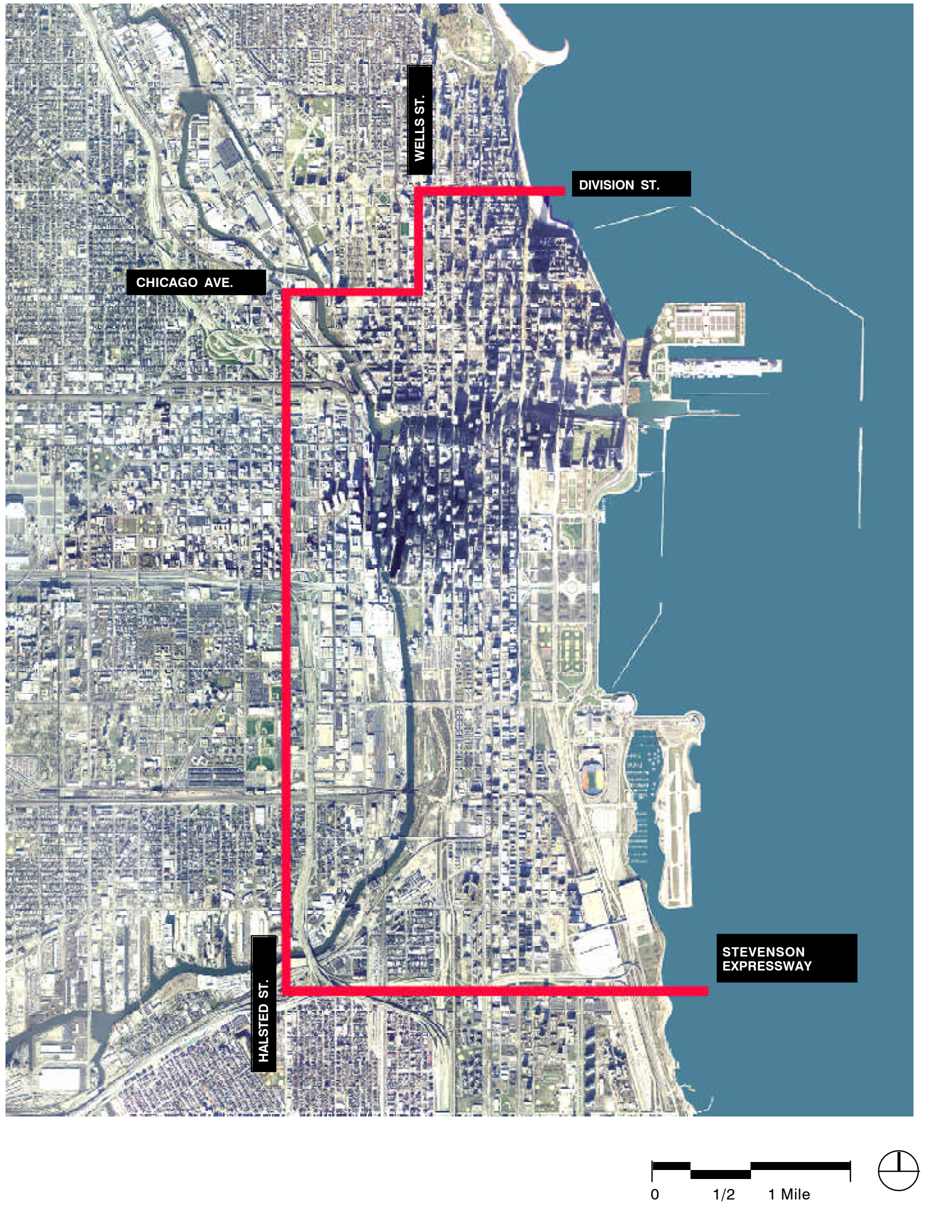
Figure 1.3 The Central Area of Chicago

The Central Area represents 107 million square feet (sf) of office, 9 million sf of retail, and 56,000 residential units.

By 2020, the Central Area will see an additional 30 to 40 million sf of office, 5 to 7 million sf of retail and 40,000 additional residential units.

In 20 years, the residential population of the Central Area may exceed 150,000 people. This is more people than currently live in any Illinois city except Rockford.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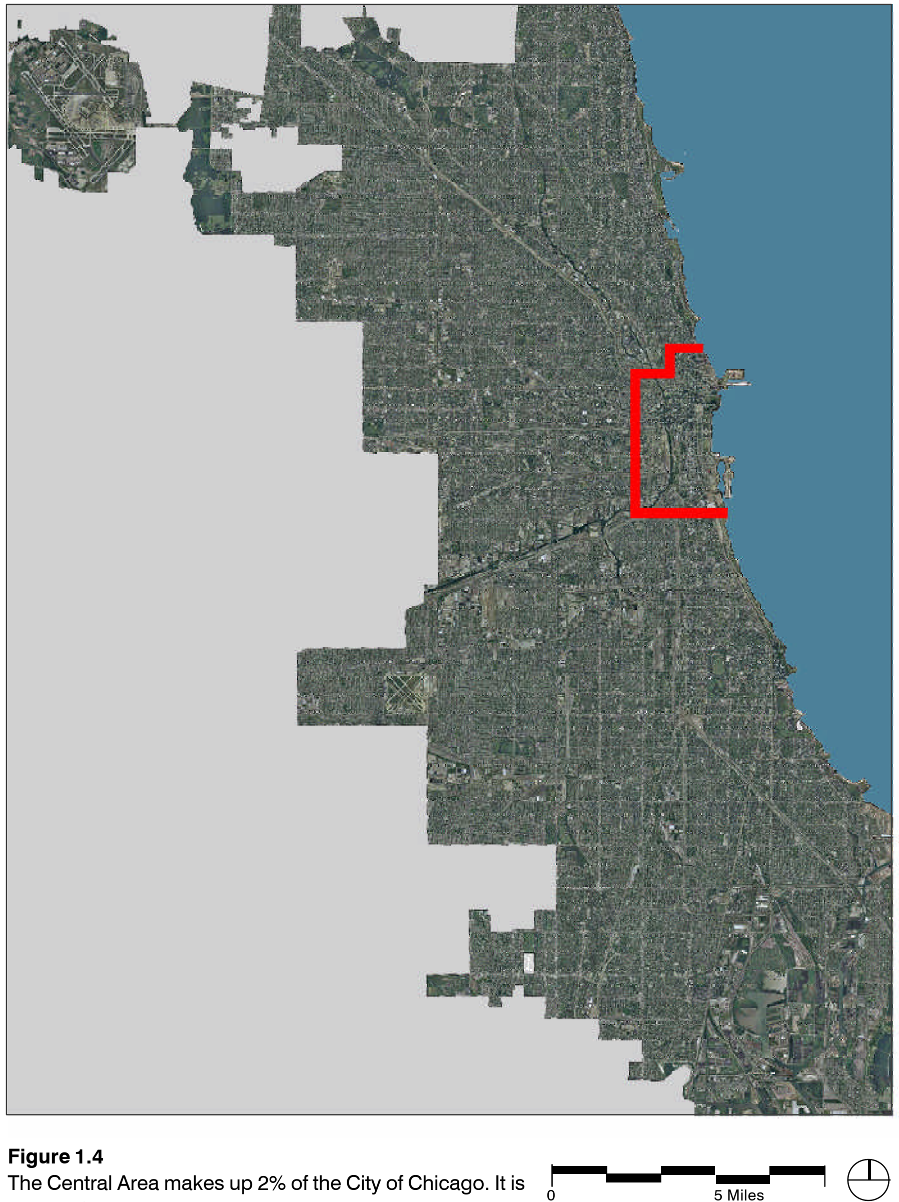

Figure 1.4
The Central Area makes up 2% of the City of Chicago. It is the hub for public transit and the region's expressways.

The Planning Process

Initiated by Mayor Richard M. Daley, the Central Area Plan is the product of over two years of discussion and reflection by a broad group of dedicated Chicagoans. Mayor Daley assembled a Steering Committee of 24 business and civic leaders to assess the challenges ahead and create a responsive and visionary plan. The Central Area Plan is the result of the Committee's work and extensive input from seven task forces.

The City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Department of Transportation, provided direction for the project and coordinated the development of the plan with other government agencies such as the Department of the Environment and the Chicago Transit Authority.

The project was overseen by a 24-member Steering Committee. Seven Task Forces assessed the challenges and opportunities faced by key Central Area development sectors. Major stakeholders in the public and private sectors were consulted throughout the planning process.

A preliminary draft of this report was released in July 2002, and people from throughout Chicago provided comments at public meetings. The Department of Planning and Development worked with the Steering Committee through the spring of 2003 to integrate public comments into this final document.

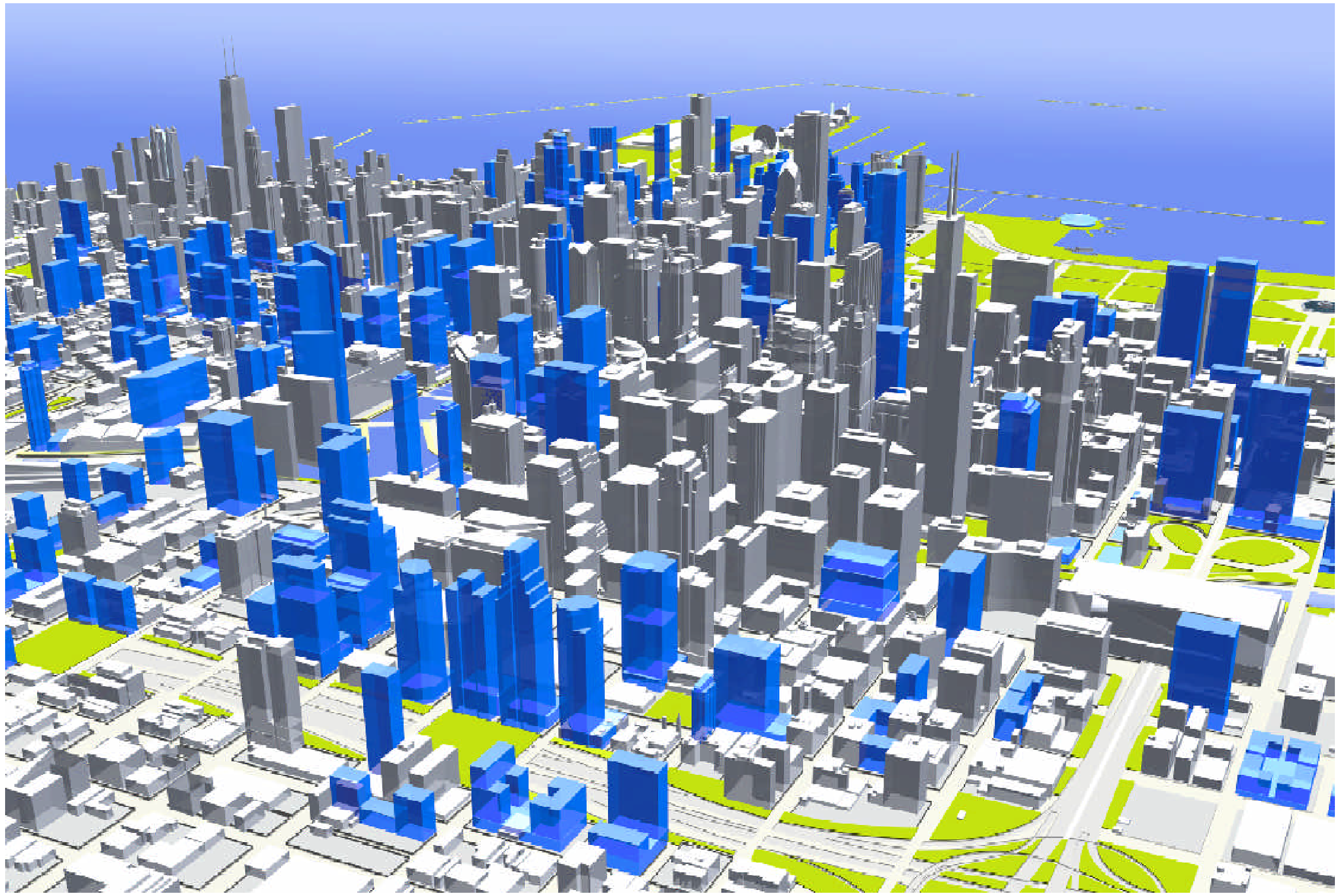

Figure 1.5
The Central Area in 2020 will continue to focus its downtown office core in the Central Loop. Expansion of the central business district west to the Kennedy Expressway will keep the office core compact, walkable and accessible by public transportation.

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Past Plans

Chicago's tradition of private and public sectors coming together to create and implement plans sets it apart from other U.S. cities. The following are some highlights of Chicago's past Central Area plans.

The Plan of Chicago (1909)

The Commercial Club
Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett

A call to "make no small plans," this plan marked the beginning of modern urban planning. It revolutionized urban design and established an agenda that still shapes Chicago to this day.

Initiatives:

- The Lakefront Park system and Lake Shore Drive
- Navy Pier
- The Shoreline Islands
- Soldier Field
- North Michigan Avenue and the Michigan Avenue Bridge
- Wacker Drive
- Congress Parkway

Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago (1958)

Chicago Department of City Planning

A municipal plan addressing land use, public buildings, pedestrian environments, transit and transportation for "the economic betterment, comfort and general welfare of the people."

Initiatives:

- The Federal Center Complex on Dearborn Street
- The Daley Civic Center and Daley Plaza
- McCormick Place
- Illinois Center
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- Stevenson Expressway Connection to Lake Shore Drive
- Oak Street and Ohio Street Beaches

Chicago 21: A Plan for the Central Area Communities (1973)

Chicago Central Area Committee and
the City of Chicago

A plan that sought to "restore the historic role of the center city and to preserve what is unique about Chicago".

Initiatives:

- Dearborn Park (the South Loop New Town)
- North Loop Redevelopment
- Redevelopment of Ogden Slip
- Reactivation of Navy Pier
- Extension of the "L" to O'Hare International Airport
- Extension of Columbus Drive over the Chicago River
- Extension of Wacker Drive to Lake Shore Drive
- Extension of the Pedway

Chicago Central Area Plan: A Plan for the Heart of the City (1983)

Chicago Central Area Committee
and the City of Chicago

This private sector plan responded to the "pressing needs of the city and the trends which are transforming it".

Initiatives:

- Creation of the Museum Campus
- Expansion of McCormick Place
- Relocation of Lakeshore Drive
- Extension of Roosevelt Road to the East
- Lakefront Gardens (Millennium Gardens)
- Streetscaping of Wacker Drive, Congress Parkway, LaSalle Street and Michigan Avenue
- West Loop Development

Current Planning within Chicago's Central Area

Finer-scale enhancements to, and preservation measures for, specific communities within the Central Area are treated more fully in district-level plans. District plans recently completed or currently in development include:

- The Near North Redevelopment Initiative (1997) - focuses on Cabrini North Extension
- River North Urban Design Plan (1987)
- A Plan for Chicago's Near Northwest Side (2002 - includes Fulton River District)
- Lakeshore East Design Guidelines (2000)
- East Loop – Vision for Greater State Street: Next Steps (1997);
- A Vision for State Street, Wabash Avenue and Michigan Avenue (2000)
- Near West Side Plan (1999)
- Near South Plan (in progress)
- Chicago River Design Guidelines/Downtown Corridor (1990); Chicago River Corridor Development Plan (1999); Chicago River Corridor Design Guidelines (1999)
- Grant Park Framework Plan (2002)
- Planning Principles for Chicago's Central Area (1991).

Regional Planning Initiatives

As we move forward in the 21st Century, a comprehensive view of how the region will grow is critical.

The Central Area Plan is based on a core belief that directing growth to the historic center of the region will: limit sprawl at the regional fringe; protect regional open space; enable the greatest number of people to commute on transit; maximize the value of existing infrastructure and improve the environmental quality of the region. The Central Area plan is consistent with and bolsters two recent regional planning initiatives.

METROPOLIS 2020

In 2003, Chicago Metropolis 2020, a nonprofit organization created by the Commercial Club of Chicago, released *The Metropolis Plan: Choices for the Chicago Region*. Based on sophisticated computer models and extensive participation of community leaders, the plan for the six-county metropolitan region contrasts "business as usual" with a new prescription for healthier growth. It illustrates the benefits of linking land use and transportation for the health and vitality of the region. Its calls for a region where we:

- Spend less time in traffic
- Live nearer to our jobs
- Protect more open space and environmentally sensitive areas
- Build communities that are friendlier to walking and biking – and therefore healthier for the people who live in them
- Make economic opportunity available to more of our region's residents.

To accomplish this vision *The Metropolis Plan* recommends that we:

- Coordinate land use and transportation plans and investments
- Create a broader range of housing options
- Rebuild and redevelop existing communities, ensure adequate affordable housing near jobs and transit, and promote economic growth in communities facing economic hardship
- Ensure that the Chicago region remains a preeminent national and international hub for freight transportation
- Design communities that are friendly to walking, biking and the use of public transit.
- Protect natural areas, open space and farmland

COMMON GROUND

The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission's (NIPC) Common Ground: A Blueprint for Regional Action initiative is engaging the region's citizens in a dialogue about the connection between shared natural resources, the transportation system and the economy. The aim is to create a clear picture of what Chicago and its surrounding counties will look like in 2050.

The City of Chicago will continue to work with Metropolis 2020, NIPC and other regional partners to implement our common vision.

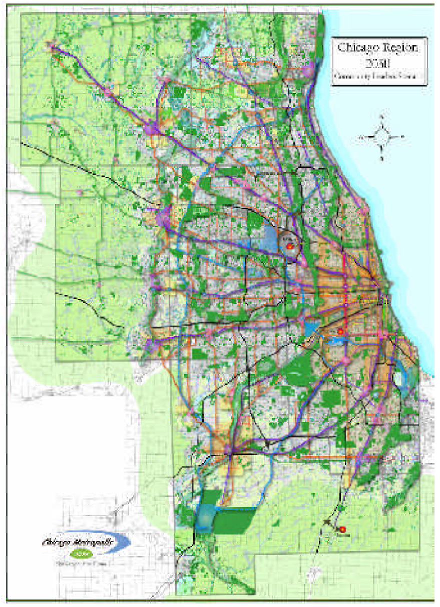

Figure 1.6
The Metropolis Plan for the region says, "a strong Chicago downtown is essential to our region's future."

CHAPTER 2

The Physical and Economic Assessment

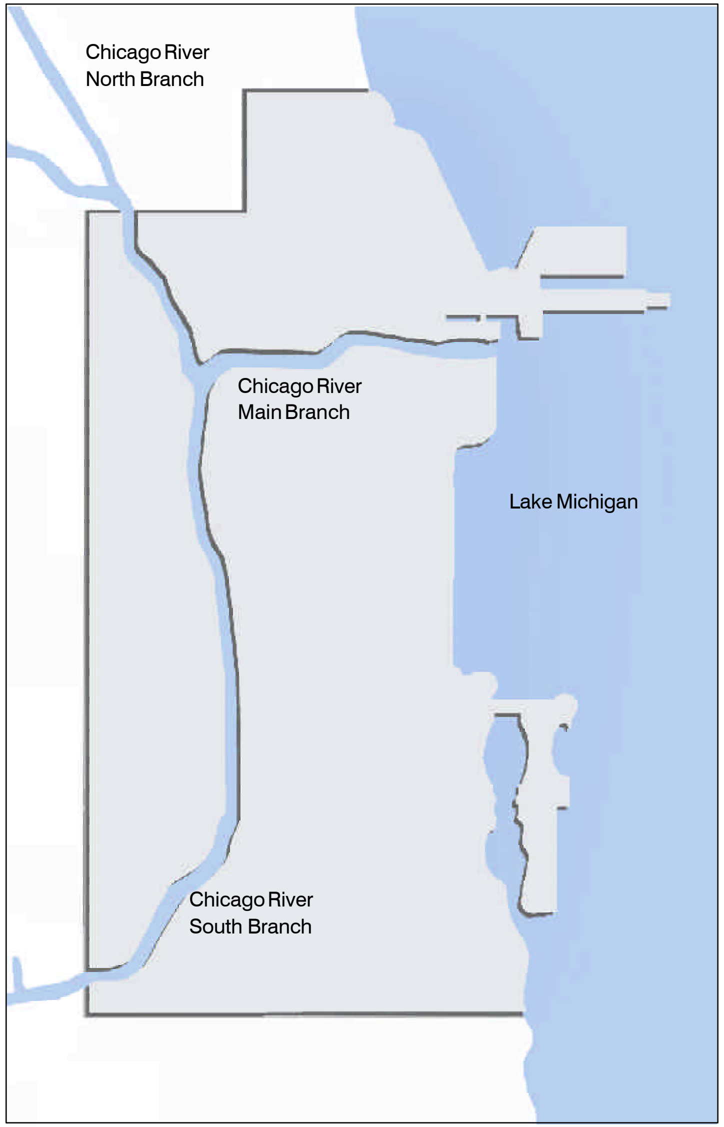
Chicago River
North Branch
Chicago River
Main Branch
Lake Michigan
Chicago River
South Branch

Figure 2.1 Natural Features - lake, river and land made Chicago a great city, and dictate its form.

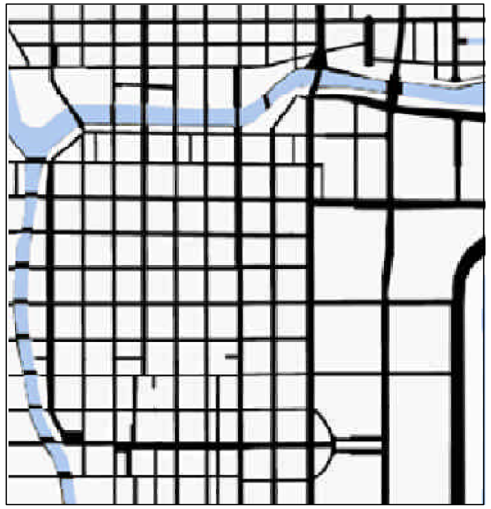

Figure 2.2 The Street Grid extending in all directions allows the downtown to be remarkably open and accessible.

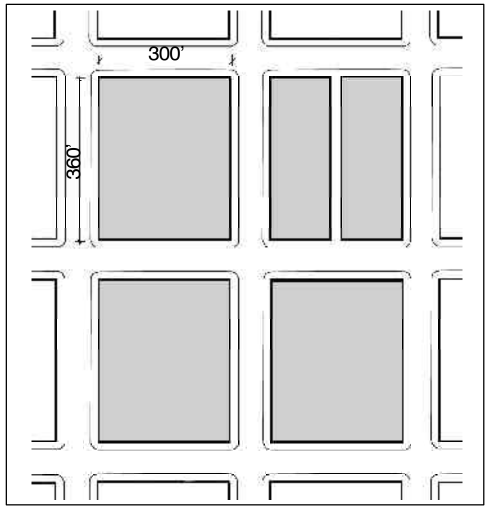

Figure 2.3 The typical block within the Central Area covers a little less than 3 acres and is bisected by alleys that improve circulation and separate uses.

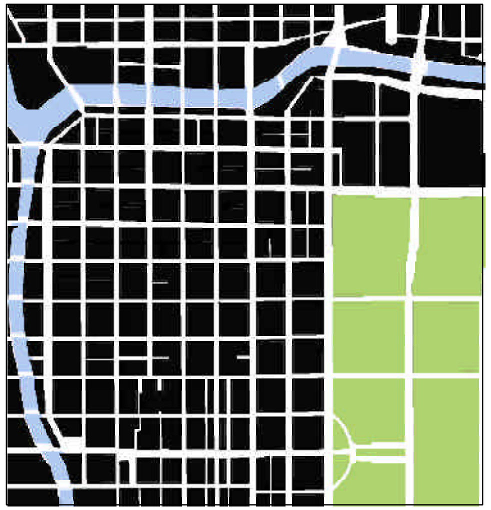

Figure 2.4 The Block Pattern organizes all development.

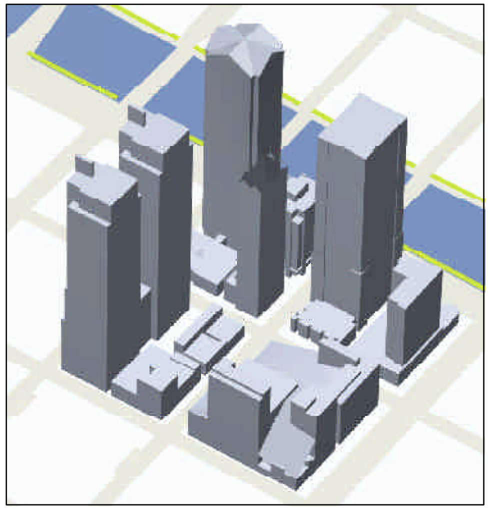

Figure 2.5 Density and diversity within each block contribute to Chicago's street level interest and its economic vitality.

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The Defining Physical Features of Chicago's Central Area

Chicago gains its special character from the combination of its natural setting on Lake Michigan and the Chicago River, its density, cultural diversity, economic vitality, variety of uses and extraordinary architecture - both old and new.

NATURAL FEATURES: LAKE, RIVER AND LAND

People who live, work, or visit the Central Area of Chicago know that it is one of the world's great urban places. The form of the Central Area is part of what makes Chicago a great city. This compact, walkable city center has traditionally been defined by its natural features: Lake Michigan on the east and the Chicago River on the north and west. Lake Michigan and the Chicago River determined where Chicago began, and continue to define the heart of the city today.

Chicago's identity is inseparable from its magnificent lake edge, and the continuous and broad lakefront park system, built out beyond the original shoreline over the last century. This great civic amenity now distinguishes Chicago from any other city in the United States. The lakefront, its park system and its collections of cultural institutions and entertainment facilities comprise one of Chicago's most important assets.

Historically, the Chicago River has served as a transportation and industrial corridor. As we enter the 21st century, the Chicago River is becoming a new open space corridor for the city and the Central Area. Once the western boundary for the downtown, it now flows through the center of the downtown. This corridor can be the focus of a great new collection of open spaces and commercial venues linked by a continuous pedestrian connection. The Erie Street Terraces and Riverwalk Gateway stand as recent examples of the commitment to this natural feature's role as a civic place.

CITY FORM

The flatland topography of Chicago is rarely identified as a positive natural feature for the city. Unlike other cities like San Francisco or Boston, Chicago does not have a collection of hills to help distinguish and create its identity. However, this expansive flat topography has allowed the cluster of tall buildings to become Chicago's identity. The man made hills of tall office and residential buildings stand in stark relief to the extensive flatness of this prairie region and marks this important confluence of the Chicago River and Lake Michigan.

THE STREET GRID

The traditional street grid of Chicago is a strong contributor to the city's urban character. As it runs north, south, and west from the Central Area, the rigor of the street grid binds the city together over many potential barriers including the Chicago River, the expressways and the rail corridors. The major streets of the grid serve as a common ground for the city and its neighborhoods, used by all for commuting, business and living.

The grid offers multiple choices for travel routes, avoiding channeling vehicles and people onto a few high traffic, high congestion streets. Pedestrians, cars, bicycles, trucks, and public transit all share street space. The continuity of this grid system must be respected, maintained and strengthened to achieve the highest levels of accessibility.

The Central Area is a walkable central city. The grid plays an important role in providing the multiple pedestrian ways from transit stations to places of work, shopping, culture, entertainment and learning. Well-landscaped streets and boulevards have also turned the grid into an extension of the civic realm and are critical for achieving a pedestrian, walkable downtown.

Streets of special significance have become landmarks of the grid. LaSalle Street, State Street and Michigan Avenue are some of the great urban streets in America. There are also special streets that respond to the natural features of the Central Area such as Wacker Drive and Lake Shore Drive, each following the water's edge. As the Central Area continues to grow, shaping development to create great streets with special identities should be a high priority.

The collection of bascule bridges that begin at Lake Shore Drive and extend west, north and south along the branches of the Chicago River, distinguish Chicago from other cities in the world. These bridges are a reflection of a tremendous infrastructure commitment that is required to make this city work. They allow the street grid to extend continuously to the west and north. The collection of bridge designs, like Chicago's architectural landmarks, are a civic resource for the Central Area, adding to its beauty and attracting visitors.

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Figure 2.6 Chicago's tradition of innovative architecture is world renowned.

Figure 2.7 Parks and open space make the Central Area liveable.

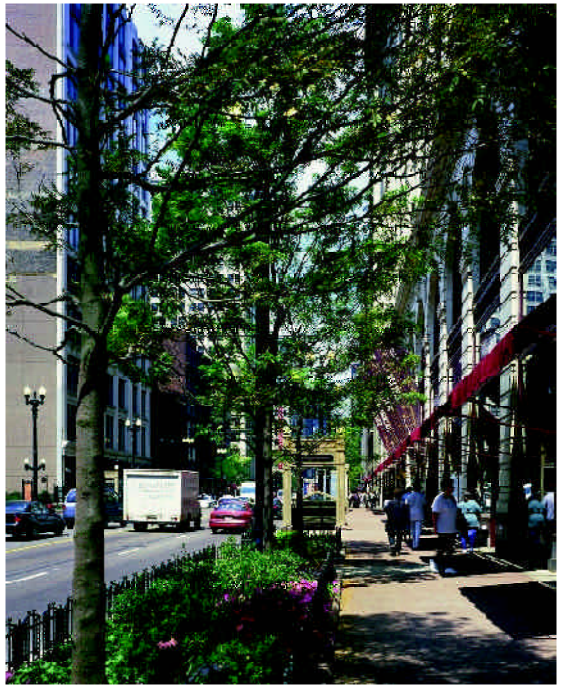
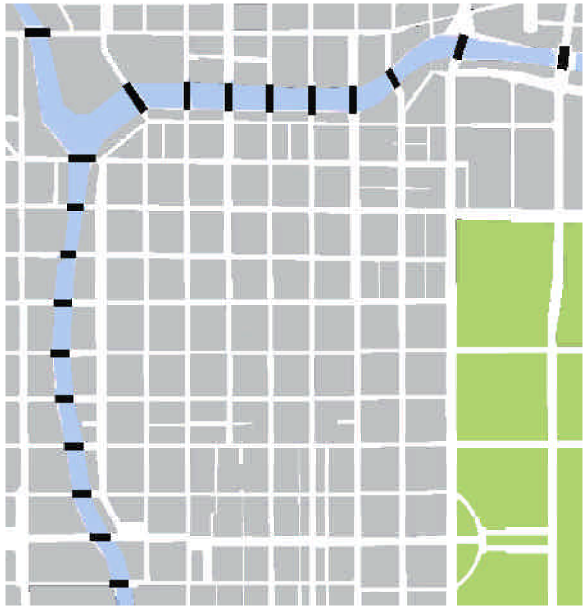


Figure 2.8 Great places and great streets are created by merging sidewalk design, active storefronts, distinctive architectural character and attractive landscaping.



Figures 2.9 and 2.10 Bascule bridges, like Chicago's architectural landmarks, are part of its unparalleled design heritage and legacy of engineering innovation.

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THE BLOCK PATTERN

The block pattern within the Central Area is very consistent. Typically blocks are 360 feet north to south and 300 feet east to west, measuring a little under 3 acres. Blocks are frequently divided in half by an alley system that separates service areas from the public entries.

The block pattern organizes Chicago's diverse downtown buildings, both old and new. Buildings built up to the property line create the continuous street façade or wall we see on LaSalle Street, State Street and Michigan Avenue, emphasizing the street and the public realm.

The pattern of multiple buildings per block, built in a dense pattern, has been a Chicago tradition. However, some of Chicago's most significant buildings have taken a full block to create a distinguished building site and also an important public plaza. Daley Center, First National Plaza, John Hancock, and the Sears Building have each taken a full block. The Federal Center on Dearborn Street is an example of a special collection of buildings that also has taken a full block.

Chicago's street grid and block pattern combine to create important view corridors. While sometimes interrupted by the CTA's elevated structure, this has also become a signature of the Central Area. Chicago has been fortunate to avoid the collection of elevated pedestrian bridges that have blocked historic view corridors.

DENSITY AND DIVERSITY

The Central Area is defined by its density and diversity of uses. Downtown Chicago has a diverse mix of office towers, residential districts, world famous shopping districts, hotels, convention centers, entertainment and tourist destinations. The mix of uses in close proximity is a great asset, allowing the Central Area to be walkable. Density also allows transit to be feasible. The small, compact downtown of Chicago creates a multitude of special urban places of unique character. This density and diversity have kept downtown Chicago, and the region, strong in increasingly competitive national and international markets.

GREAT PLACES

Michigan Avenue, State Street, the Museum Campus, the Gallery District, the Jackson Loft District, Chinatown, Prairie Avenue and Streeterville are a few of the special places that give the Central Area its world famous character. Preserving the scale, density, architectural style, pedestrian interest and distinctive character of these districts is critical to maintaining Chicago’s exceptional quality of life.

INNOVATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Chicago is famous for its tradition of great architecture. Home to the Prairie and Chicago Schools of architecture, the first high rise, the mixed-use high rise, and some of the tallest buildings in the world, Chicago continues to promote a strong, innovative and progressive design community. The city’s guidelines and ordinances must continue to respect and preserve its great historic architecture while at the same time encouraging the design and development communities to create innovative new designs.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Chicago's park system is renowned throughout the world. The Central Area's lakefront is a legacy of past generations of leaders. More recently, the development of the Museum Campus and Millenium Park have enhanced the lakefront, as will the proposed new Art Institute gardens.

The Chicago River is also emerging as part of the Central Area's open space system. A mandatory open space setback and assembly of a continuous path is laying the foundation for a continuous riverwalk system through the city.

The water's edge is not the only place where downtown workers, visitors, and residents go to relax, exercise, and enjoy the outdoors. Central Area parks and plazas and its landscaped streets are also increasingly important parts of the Central Area's open-space network.

CONCLUSION

The view of the city from Lake Michigan, with Grant Park in the foreground, the Michigan Avenue streetwall behind, and skyscrapers beyond is an internationally recognized image of Chicago. The view did not emerge by accident. It was created as Chicagoans responded to the natural features of their home city and established precedents, rules, visions and plans for how to grow, organize and create their city. To ensure the future growth and quality of place of Chicago's Central Area the best of its physical attributes must be maintained, nurtured and strengthened.

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Figure 2.11
The East Loop and South Loop have seen remarkable changes in recent years.

Residential conversions, new residential development, cultural and academic institution expansion are transforming this historic portion of downtown into a diverse, lively urban environment.

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The Economic Assessment

Great changes lie ahead. Chicago's Central Area is poised for significant new employment growth

In the past 20 years, growth has transformed the Central Area. The 43.5 million square feet of new office space constructed downtown between 1980 and 2000 was equivalent to the entire metropolitan inventory of Phoenix or St. Louis. Chicago added more downtown residents than any other American city, including New York. New neighborhoods stand on land formerly occupied by warehouses, railroad tracks and scrap yards. Loft buildings previously used for manufacturing and distribution serve as residences. Areas once dominated by parking lots are now new entertainment districts. Michigan Avenue has evolved into one of America's premier shopping streets, and State Street is again a great street, with nationally known department stores.

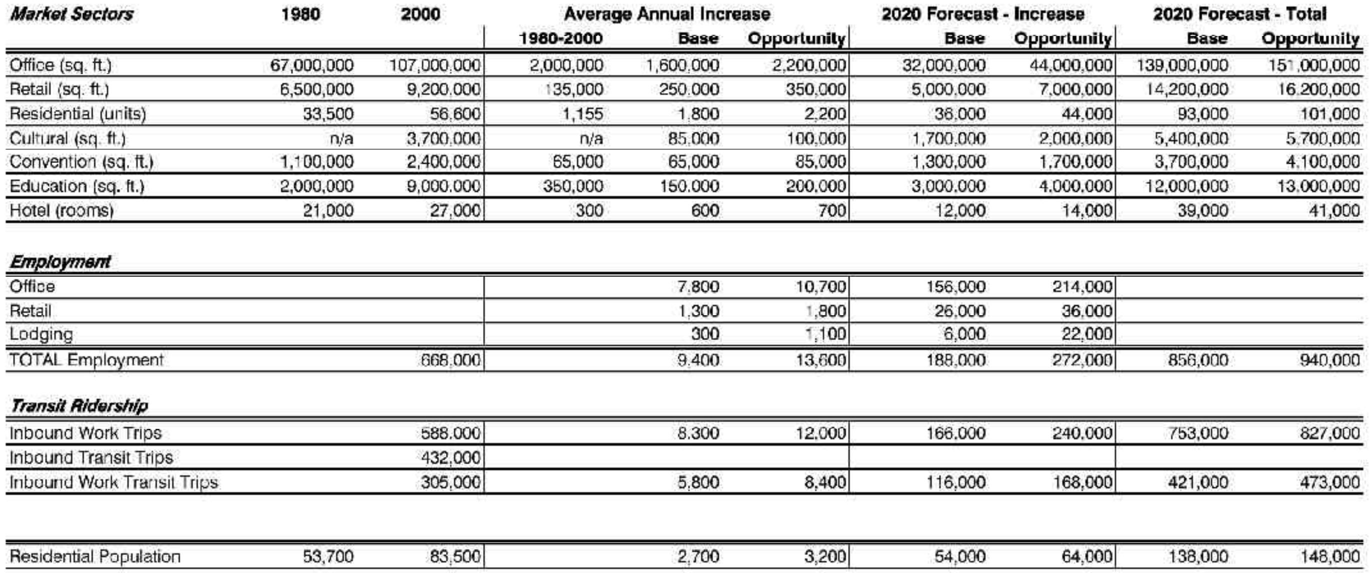
The transformation is not over. Hundreds of thousands of new jobs will be created in the Central Area by 2020 – or rather – they may be created, if the new workers can be provided with efficient transportation, a high quality work environment and places to live.

To establish the economic basis for the Plan, the Plan assesses each sector of the Central Area's economy and projects future growth. The sectors analyzed were:

- Office
- Residential
- Education
- Retail
- Convention/hotel
- Cultural
- Industrial

Annual demand for land per market sector through 2020 was estimated under both conservative and best-case assumptions. Quantitative analysis was supplemented with interviews and surveys. The following summaries are drawn from *Economic Base and Sector Analysis, Central Area, Chicago, Illinois 2000 – 2020*[1]. Except where otherwise stated, historical data is based on the period from 1980 to the present. "Base" is used to describe the conservative growth scenario, and "Opportunity" represents the best-case assumptions.

Table 2.1
Historic and Projected Growth, Chicago Central Area, 1980-2020[2]



Market Sectors	**1980**	**2000**	**Average Annual Increase**			**2020 Forecast - Increase**		**2020 Forecast - Total**	
			1980-2000	**Base**	**Opportunity**	**Base**	**Opportunity**	**Base**	**Opportunity**
Office (sq. ft.)	67,000,000	107,000,000	2,000,000	1,600,000	2,200,000	32,000,000	44,000,000	139,000,000	151,000,000
Retail (sq. ft.)	6,500,000	9,200,000	135,000	250,000	350,000	5,000,000	7,000,000	14,200,000	16,200,000
Residential (units)	33,500	56,600	1,155	1,800	2,200	36,000	44,000	93,000	101,000
Cultural (sq. ft.)	n/a	3,700,000	n/a	85,000	100,000	1,700,000	2,000,000	5,400,000	5,700,000
Convention (sq. ft.)	1,100,000	2,400,000	65,000	65,000	85,000	1,300,000	1,700,000	3,700,000	4,100,000
Education (sq. ft.)	2,000,000	9,000,000	350,000	150,000	200,000	3,000,000	4,000,000	12,000,000	13,000,000
Hotel (rooms)	21,000	27,000	300	600	700	12,000	14,000	39,000	41,000
Employment									
Office				7,800	10,700	156,000	214,000		
Retail				1,300	1,800	26,000	36,000		
Lodging				300	1,100	6,000	22,000		
TOTAL Employment		668,000		9,400	13,600	188,000	272,000	856,000	940,000
Transit Ridership									
Inbound Work Trips		588,000		8,300	12,000	166,000	240,000	753,000	827,000
Inbound Transit Trips		432,000							
Inbound Work Transit Trips		305,000		5,800	8,400	116,000	168,000	421,000	473,000
Residential Population	53,700	83,500		2,700	3,200	54,000	64,000	138,000	148,000

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[1] Arthur Anderson LLP, Goodman Williams Group, Real Estate Planning Group, Susanne Cannon. 2001

[2] These projections do not include the health care sector, which is a growing service and employment sector in the Central Area. Information on the Central Area's major health care provider, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, can be found in chapter 5 in the Near North District.

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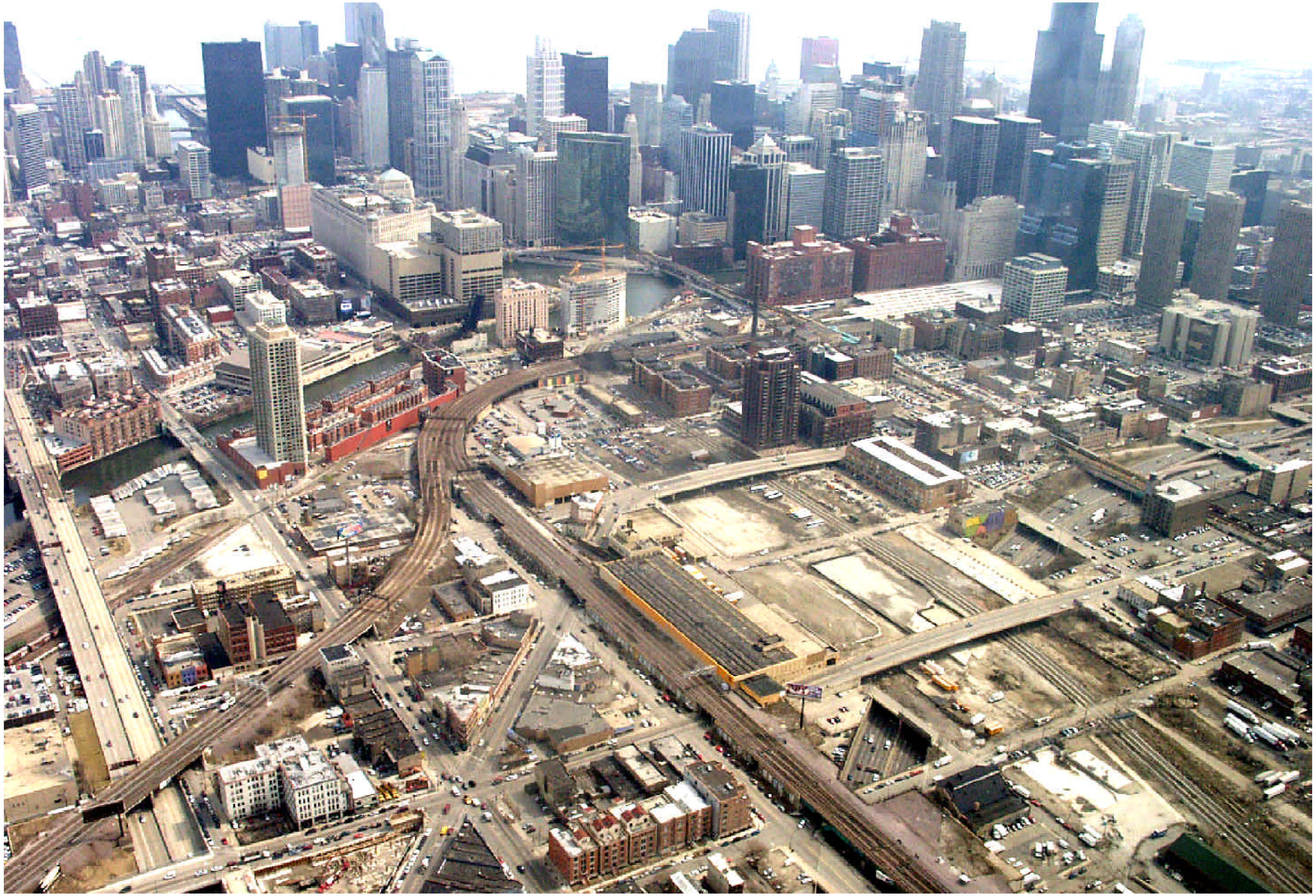
Figure 2.12
The Near Northwest offers potential for high density residential neighborhoods and enhancing existing industrial areas.

Many of the rail easements offer potential for greenways extending from the Central Area to the West Side.



Employment

Central Area jobs will increase at a significantly higher rate than in the past

The key to understanding the forthcoming changes in the Central Area is the shifting nature of downtown employment. While more than 70 million square feet of office space was constructed between 1960 and the present, total employment in the Central Area has increased only modestly. What has changed dramatically is the mix of jobs. Chicago's Central Area was once a major industrial center, with rail yards, clothing factories, and printing plants. Over time, blue-collar employment declined while white-collar jobs rose. By far the largest employment increase was in services, where the number of jobs more than doubled between 1972 and 2000. The greatest losses were in manufacturing and wholesale trade, with employment in both categories dropping by more than two-thirds.

This transition in the Central Area workforce, in which gains and losses largely cancel out, will soon end. The two employment categories in continuing decline, manufacturing and wholesale trade, now account for less than 7% of the Central Area job base. It is likely that total Central Area employment will now climb at a significantly faster rate than in the past.

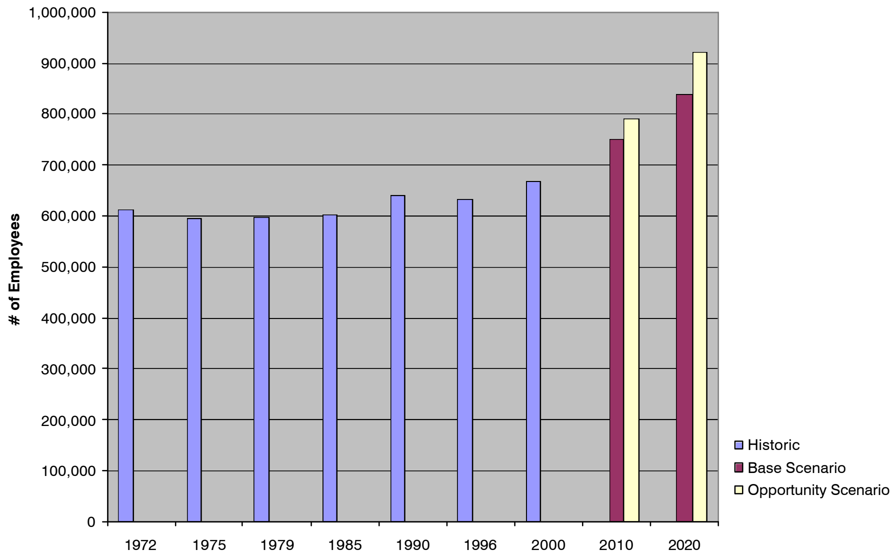


Table 2.2
Total Central Area Employment
1972-2020

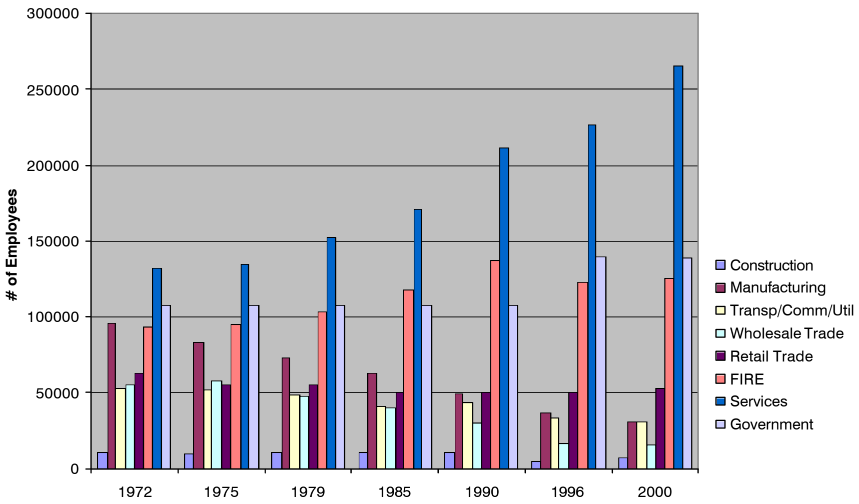


Table 2.3
Central Area Employment by Market Sector
1972-2000

While total employment has only increased modestly, the mix of jobs has changed dramatically. Manufacturing and wholesale trade have declined by two thirds, while service sector jobs have doubled.

Projected growth: An additional 188,000 to 272,000 downtown workers are expected by 2020, an increase of 28 to 41%.

Figure 2.13
Office Space, Chicago Central Business District, 1980-2020

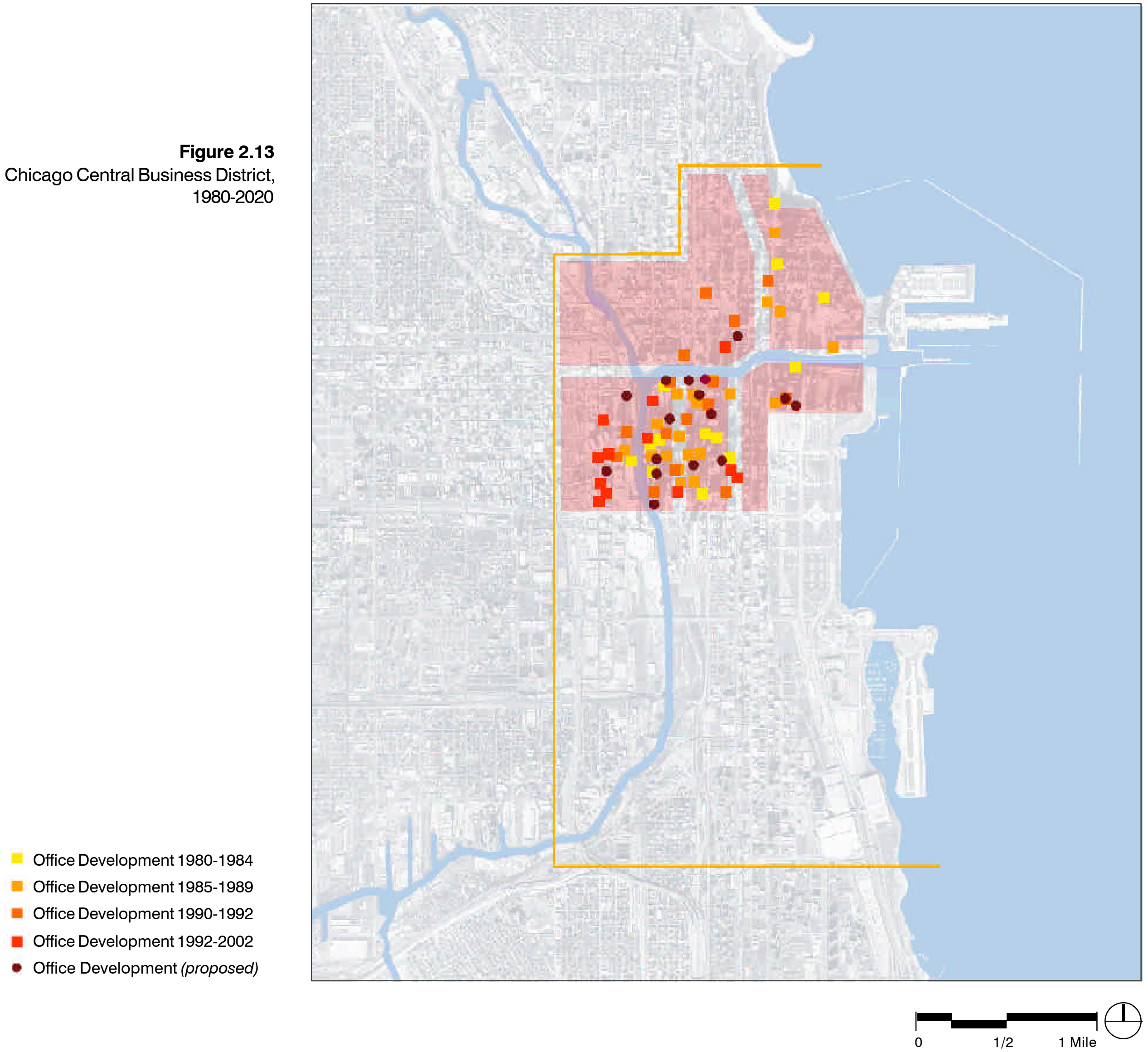
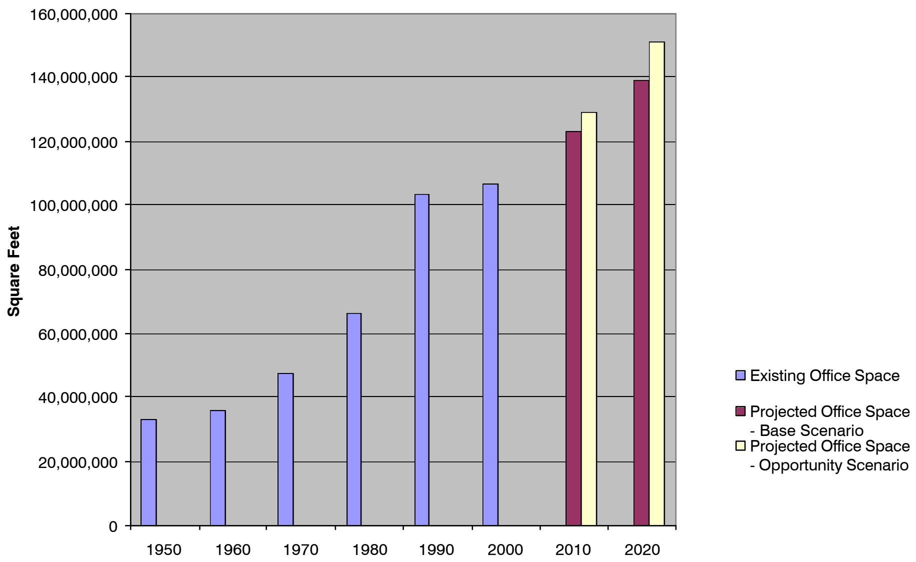

🟨 Office Development 1980-1984
🟧 Office Development 1985-1989
🟧 Office Development 1990-1992
🟥 Office Development 1992-2002
● Office Development *(proposed)*
0
1/2
1 Mile

Table 2.4
Central Area Office Development, 1950-2020
Chicago has approximately 50% of the metropolitan region's office space.



The type of office development analyzed here consists of investment-grade Class A, B, and C buildings. The letter classifications indicate building quality and generally correspond to a structure's age and amenities.

The Economic Engine: The Office Sector

There will be strong demand for new office space in the Central Area

GAINS IN OFFICE SPACE

Between 1980 and 2000 more than 40 million square feet of office space was built in the Central Area, substantially exceeding the entire downtown inventory in 1960. Despite the strong gain, the market experienced the boom-and-bust cycle typical of speculative office development. Between 1985 and 1989 an average of 3.2 million square feet of office space was constructed annually, the highest rate of construction in Chicago's history. No additional construction occurred until 1999, and then on only a small scale. From 2000 to 2002 eight new buildings added 6.3 million square feet. In 2002, the market again experienced vacancies and a slowdown in new projects in response to the increase in supply and national economic slowdown.

THE CENTRAL AREA'S REGIONAL SHARE

Central Area office space now totals nearly 107 million square feet – approximately 55% of total office space in metropolitan Chicago. Chicago's percentage of regional inventory is larger than that of any other major U.S. city except New York, with 62%.

Impressive though it is, Chicago's share of regional office development has declined in recent years to 40% of regional office absorption. Accordingly two forecasting scenarios were developed. The base scenario assumes that the Central Area will continue to capture 40% of new office demand in the metropolitan area, for an average annual increase of 1.6 million square feet through 2020. The opportunity scenario assumes a 50% capture rate for an average annual increase of 2.2 million square feet. The opportunity scenario also assumes that the major recommendations of this Plan, particularly the expansion of transit capacity, are implemented.

OFFICE GROWTH IS STRONGEST IN THE CENTRAL LOOP AND WEST LOOP

Since the majority of downtown workers use CTA rail and bus lines, which are concentrated in the Central Loop, many infill locations in that area will remain prime office sites. The majority of the projected office growth will occur in the Central Loop.

Although substantial office development occurred in most downtown sub-markets during the study period, the growth rate was strongest in the West Loop, defined as the area west of Franklin Street including the strong Wacker Drive market. Substantial infill development occurred between Wells Street and the Chicago River and a number of buildings were constructed west of Canal Street, an area previously considered marginal. Given the importance of the West Loop rail stations to commuters, and the increasing scarcity of available sites in the traditional core, continued westward expansion seems likely.

Relatively little office construction occurred in the East Loop – indeed, the most notable development was the conversion of some Class C buildings to residential and educational use. Office construction north of the river is limited and is expected to account for less than 15 percent of new demand. No speculative office construction at all occurred south of Congress Parkway, although two dedicated bank processing facilities were built on South Canal Street.

TRANSIT IS THE CENTRAL AREA'S MAJOR ATTRACTION FOR BUSINESS

To gauge the Central Area's economic prospects, top executives at 300 downtown businesses were surveyed. Survey respondents identified the following as the most important factors in choosing a downtown location:

- Proximity to mass transit was the chief consideration according to 73% of respondents. According to the survey, 72% of employees take CTA or Metra to the workplace, while 23% drive and 6% walk.
- Other important factors were proximity to clients (46%) and state-of-the-art technology infrastructure (43%).
- Nearly one-third of companies interviewed indicated that an "urban residential life-style" was a factor in the decision to locate downtown.

Locational factors considered important in recruiting and retaining employees included:

- Location in the Chicago region (80%)
- Location in downtown Chicago (70%)
- Proximity to mass transit (61%).

Factors considered of lesser importance included:

- Availability of parking (19%)
- Proximity to personal and retail services (12%)
- Proximity to downtown housing (8%).

In short, the Central Area's traditional strength as a regional commercial center with good transit access continues to be its principal selling point for corporate decision makers. Its recent emergence as a high-end residential district has also increased its attractiveness to business in attracting top talent to the area.

Projected Growth : 32 to 40 million square feet of new office space to accommodate 180,000 to 200,000 new jobs.

Figure 2.14
The Central Area Office Core remains the prime location for office space.

Figure 2.15
New office buildings are being constructed in the Wacker Drive corridor.

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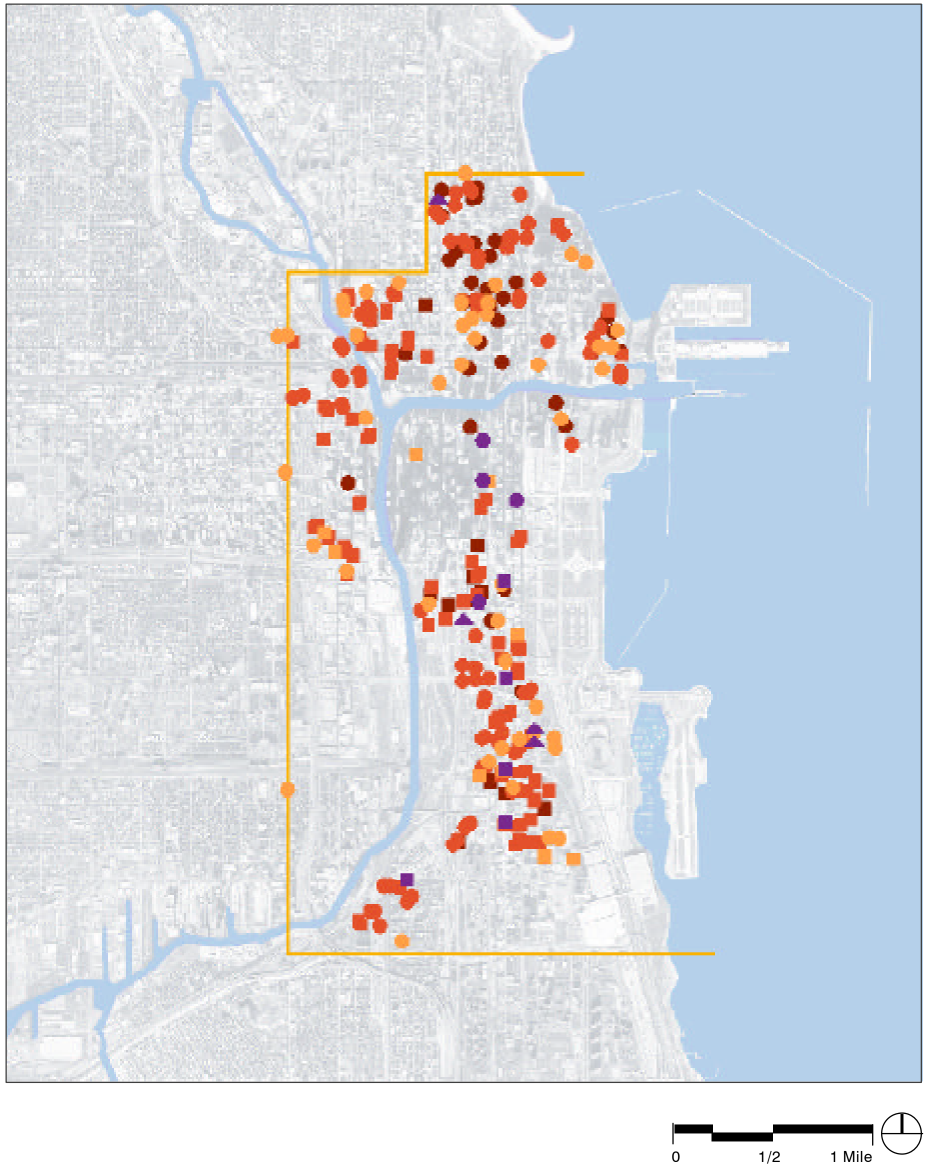
Figure 2.16
Central Area Residential Development
1980-2020



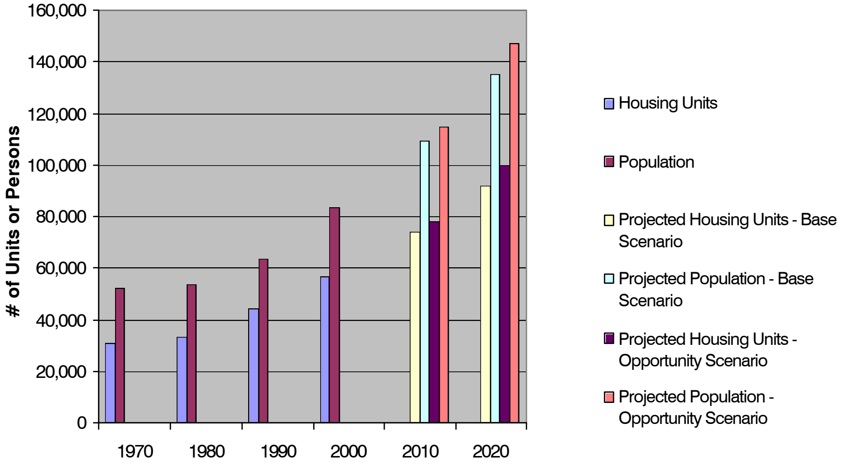
● SALE (new) Under construction
■ SALE (reuse) Under construction

● SALE (new) 1980-2000
■ SALE (reuse) 1980-2000

● RENTAL (new) 1980-2000
■ RENTAL (reuse) 1980-2000

● Student Housing
▲ Senior Housing
■ Affordable Housing

Table 2.5
Housing Units and Population,
Chicago Central Area, 1970-2020



Population projections assume average household size of 1.47 persons based on 2000 Central Area census results.

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A Quality Place to Live: The Residential Sector

The Central Area housing boom will build on the momentum of the 1980's and 1990's

DRAMATIC RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

The surge in the Central Area residential market was one of the most remarkable development trends of the 1990's. Between 1990 and 2000 downtown Chicago had one of the highest residential growth rates of any major U.S. city. It now ranks fourth in downtown population behind New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, and at the current rate of increase will rank second within a few years.

More than 32,000 dwellings were constructed in the Central Area between 1980 and 2000, for a net increase (less demolitions) of 23,000 units. The residential population increased 56% and currently exceeds 83,000. The pace of development continues, with 15,000 units added between 2000 and 2002.

In the 1980's, about four out of five new units were rental, many in large-scale developments financed with federal or state assistance. Presidential Towers alone had nearly 2,500 units. In the 1990's, over half of the new units were in privately financed condominium projects. Shifting demographics, a healthy economy, and low interest rates were important factors in this change.

On average during the 1990's roughly 1,600 dwellings were built annually, for a net increase of 1,300 when demolitions are taken into account. A base growth scenario of 1,800 dwellings annually and an opportunity scenario of 2,200 are projected through 2020. These projections consider absorption history, land availability, product trends, density, and the competitive position of the Central Area relative to other Chicago communities.

CHANGING LAND USE

An important factor in the growth of downtown housing was the creation of stable residential markets south and west of the Loop, and the expansion of the Near North Side housing market south of Chicago Avenue. Many projects in these areas were built on former railroad and industrial land, including Dearborn Park, Illinois Center, Central Station, Kinzie Station, and River East. Adaptive reuse of office and industrial buildings led the way in creating new neighborhoods in the West Loop and River North and diversifying the Loop. Few conversion opportunities remain, leading developers to construct new buildings.

ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Central Area housing meets the needs of a broad range of household incomes. Much of the new development caters to the affluent, particularly empty nesters. Moderate-income, often younger households tend to be attracted to moderately-priced lofts and condominium conversions. Chinatown and Pilsen continue their long history of providing affordable family housing. Affordable housing, including SROs, senior housing, low-income housing, and tax-credit rentals, remains an important part of Central Area housing stock.

Chicago Housing Authority properties include Hilliard Homes and Ickes Homes, which are being redeveloped as mixed-income communities. Student housing is proliferating, particularly in the South Loop, adding considerably to the vitality of the Central Area.

Downtown residents are not typical of Chicagoans as a whole – they tend to be more affluent and have fewer children. A 1999 study sponsored by the City of Chicago on the demand for downtown housing, "An Analysis of the Market Potential for Residential Development – Central Core Area – Chicago, Illinois", by Tracy Cross and Associates, Inc., concludes that the price of a typical three-bedroom townhome in the Central Area is roughly twice that of a typical suburban home, limiting the appeal of the Central Area to families with children.

Projected Growth : 36,000-44,000 new dwellings, 54,000-64,000 more residents.

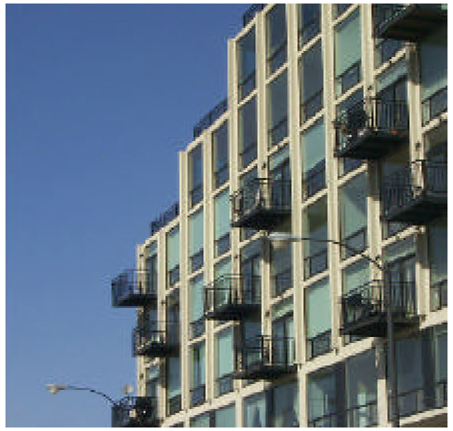

Figure 2.17 and Figure 2.18
There was a net increase of 23,000 residential units between 1980 and 2000 in the Central Area.

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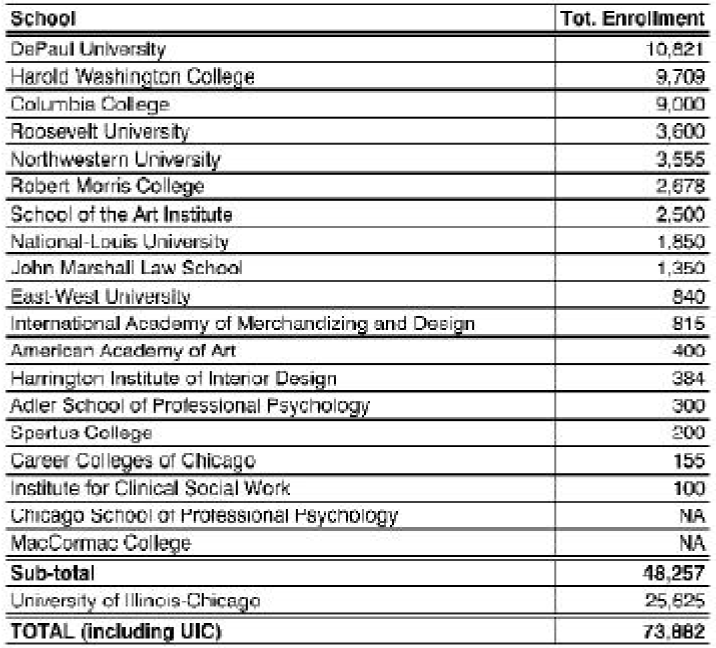
Figure 2.19
DePaul University

Figure 2.20
Educational institutions have preserved and reused many East and South Loop buildings.

Table 2.6
Post Secondary School Enrollment



School	Tot. Enrollment
DePaul University	10,821
Harold Washington College	9,709
Columbia College	9,000
Roosevelt University	3,600
Northwestern University	3,555
Robert Morris College	2,678
School of the Art Institute	2,500
National-Louis University	1,850
John Marshall Law School	1,350
East-West University	840
International Academy of Merchandizing and Design	815
American Academy of Art	400
Harrington Institute of Interior Design	384
Adler School of Professional Psychology	300
Spertus College	200
Career Colleges of Chicago	155
Institute for Clinical Social Work	100
Chicago School of Professional Psychology	NA
MacCormac College	NA
Sub-total	**48,257**
University of Illinois-Chicago	25,625
TOTAL (including UIC)	**73,882**

Source: Individual school administrators, school websites, Goodman Williams Group and Arthur Anderson LLP

A Crossroads of Ideas: The Education Sector

Educational institutions will continue to invest in the Central Area, providing opportunities for life-long learning

The East and South Loop are now home to a major concentration of post-secondary schools. Institutions of higher learning became a major presence in the Central Area during the study period. Currently 22 post-secondary schools are located downtown with a total enrollment of approximately 51,000 students. The University of Illinois at Chicago, located immediately west of the Central Area, adds another 25,000 students for a total of 76,000. The largest concentration of schools are in the portion of the East Loop bounded by Michigan Avenue and Dearborn Street, Madison Street and 14th Street.

Interviews were conducted with administrators at the Central Area institutions likely to experience the highest levels of growth – Columbia College, DePaul University, Roosevelt University, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. These interviews revealed:

- Over the next five years, enrollment at these four institutions is expected to increase 34% from the current 25,000 students to more than 34,000.
- Over the next five to 10 years, total square footage is projected to increase 18%, from approximately 4.4 million square feet to more than 5.2 million.
- Over the next five to ten years, the demand for additional dormitory beds is expected to increase 125% from the current 1,300 beds to more than 3,000 beds in order to meet the increase in the 18- to 24-year-old student population.
- Many institutions have purchased or leased lots or buildings that can be developed into classroom, administrative, or dormitory space in order to accommodate anticipated growth and compete in the increasingly competitive downtown real estate market.

Projected Growth : an additional 3-4 million square feet of space by 2020 for classroom, administrative, or dormitory space.

The Marketplace: Retailing in the Central Area

Central Area retailing is poised for growth extending beyond the established Michigan Avenue and State Street shopping districts

Retail growth occurred throughout the Central Area during the 1990's, partly in response to the growing downtown residential population. Retail space increased from 7.2 million square feet in 1990 to 9.2 million in 2000, an average of 200,000 square feet a year. During the period from 1997 to the present more than 3.6 million square feet of retail space were completed, under construction, or in planning throughout the Central Area.

NORTH MICHIGAN AND STATE STREET

Together, North Michigan Avenue and the State Street - Wabash Avenue retail corridors constitute approximately 60% of all retail activity in the Central Area. The two corridors serve distinctly different markets. A survey of 4,700 downtown shoppers conducted for this plan found that Michigan Avenue shoppers were largely U.S. and international visitors while the State Street - Wabash Avenue corridor predominantly served downtown workers and city residents.

New retail developments included the State Street openings of Sears, Borders Books, Old Navy, and the DePaul Center, as well as the North Bridge Mall development on North Michigan Avenue. The largest share of new development (45%) occurred in the North Michigan Avenue corridor, which added approximately 900,000 square feet, including Nordstrom's at 271,000 square feet. The State-Wabash corridor added more than 285,000 square feet between 1991 and 1999, with the new Sears store on State Street adding another 243,000 square feet in 2001. Vacancy rates dropped and rents increased in both districts between 1990 and 1999.

NEW TRENDS

Continuing retail expansion is demonstrated by the 78 new stores that opened in the Central Area between 1999 and 2002. A major new trend is the emergence of convenience shopping to serve new residents – eight new downtown food and drugstores have opened or are under construction. "Big box" retail is anticipated on Roosevelt Road and Cermak Road west of Canal Street on the Near South Side, similar to the type of retail in the North Avenue - Clybourn Street corridor on the North Side.

Projected Growth : Average annual growth of 250,000 to 350,000 square feet is projected through 2020, for a total of 5 to 7 million square feet of new retail space.

Figure 2.21
Specialty shopping districts are emerging, like this one in River North.

Figure 2.22
North Michigan Avenue had the largest share of retail development in the 1990's.

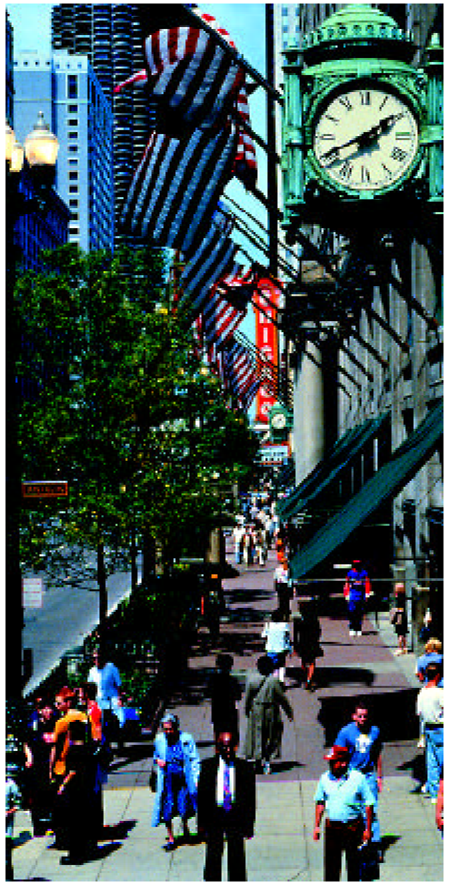


Figure 2.23
State Street continues its tradition as a great retail street with its major anchor stores, the new Sears and Borders, and other new retailers.

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Visiting the Central Area: Convention & Hotel Sector

Expansion of McCormick Place, office and tourism growth will continue to bring more visitors to Chicago.

Figure 2.24
The recent expansion of McCormick Place has doubled the number of events, which attract more than 3 million people annually.

The Chicago convention and hotel industries are closely linked. In 2000, 52% of Chicago's hotel traffic was derived from meetings and conventions, 35% from other business travel, and 13% from tourism. Some 35 million people visit Chicago annually, the majority of them on business.

The Central Area's hotel and convention business grew substantially during the study period. Highlights:

- Since the opening of the South Building in 1996, McCormick Place has retained its place as the nation's largest convention center with over 2.2 million square feet of exhibit space. In order to meet increased demand and compete with other large convention centers in Orlando and Las Vegas, McCormick Place plans to build an additional 800,000 square feet of exhibition and meeting space by 2007.
- Since 1990, the number of events at McCormick Place has roughly doubled, from 40 events annually to more than 80 events in 1999. Attendance has grown commensurately, topping 3 million attendees in 1999.
- Convention and business travel will remain the major drivers of Chicago hotel traffic for the foreseeable future. However, pleasure travel is playing a larger role as the Central Area's attractiveness as a tourist destination increases.
- The inventory of Central Area hotel rooms increased by an average of 300 rooms per year between 1980 and 2000 in response to the growth of McCormick Place, tourism, and the expanding downtown office market. The majority of the growth occurred in recent years, with more than 5,000 hotel rooms built or renovated between 1998 and 2000. Average annual occupancy rose to a record 74% in 2000.
- Thirteen hotel projects totaling more than 5,700 rooms are currently under construction or planned. The majority of projects are in the River North and Streeterville areas and range in size between 250 and 450 rooms. Most of the new rooms are expected to be delivered to market by the end of 2003.

Projected Growth : The Central Area will add 600 to 700 hotel rooms annually for a total of 12,000 to 14,000 by 2020.

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A Global Draw: Cultural Attractions

The Central Area's world-class museums and cultural attractions are powerful tourist magnets

Long valued for their contribution to the city's cultural life, Chicago's museums and cultural attractions have assumed increasing importance as tourism destinations over the past 20 years, particularly since 1995. Of Chicago's top 14 tourist attractions, eight are cultural institutions: the Shedd Aquarium, Field Museum, Art Institute, Cultural Center, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Adler Planetarium, Chicago Children's Museum, and Museum of Broadcast Communications. Between 500,000 and 2.5 million people visit each of these attractions annually. To accommodate the increase in visitors, many of the museums have embarked on expansion programs. Highlights:

- The Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum spent $46 million on building expansion and exhibit improvements. The Planetarium expects to spend another $5 million in the next five years on further improvements.
- The Art Institute of Chicago is planning a new wing. Tentatively scheduled for completion in 2006, the new wing will contain approximately 250,000 square feet and cost $175 million.
- The Field Museum invested approximately $43 million in recent years on the Underground Adventure and Sue the Dinosaur exhibits. The museum expects to spend approximately $250 million over the next five years on new exhibits, a conservation/environmental initiative, maintenance, technology, and other purposes.
- The John G. Shedd Aquarium is currently in the midst of a $110 million program to renovate existing facilities and add 45,000 square feet of space. The institution plans to spend another $110 million by 2012 for further renovations and an additional 45,000 square feet.
- Millennium Park is expected to draw 2.5 to 3 million visitors annually, equal to the combined draw of the Art Institute and the Field Museum.
- The Randolph Street theater district saw the opening or renovation of the Cadillac Palace Theater, the Goodman Theatre, the Oriental Theater/ Ford Center for the Performing Arts and the Chicago Theater. The forthcoming Chicago Music and Dance Theater in Millennium Park will add to this cultural mix and extend the district.
- The Chicago Architectural Foundation has expanded its facilities to serve as a focal point for visitors who come to explore Chicago's rich architectural heritage.

Projected Growth : Central Area cultural institutions will add 85,000 to 100,000 square feet of space annually, a total of 1.7 to 2 million square feet by 2020.

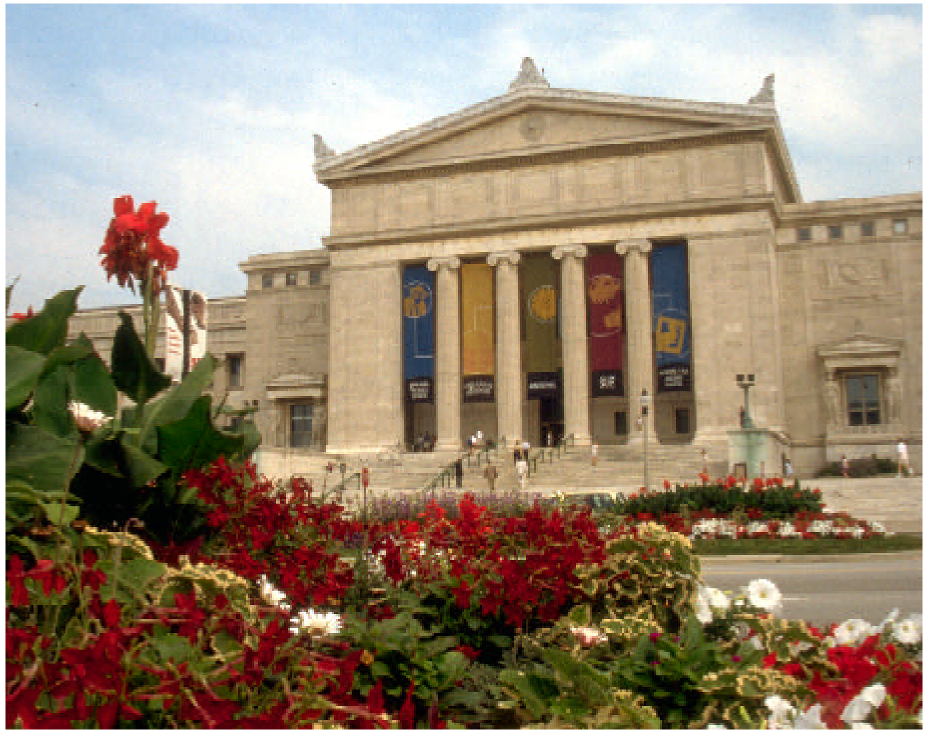

Figure 2.25
The Field Museum and its neighbors on the newly integrated museum campus are major attractions for tourists and residents. Development of the museum campus has dramatically enhanced lakefront public space.

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Making and Moving Products: The Industrial Sector

Industrial land close to downtown is essential for warehousing and distribution services

Figure 2.26
Printing and distribution in the Central Area

Figure 2.27
Manufacturing on Goose Island

CHANGING LAND USE AND EMPLOYMENT

Central Area employment in traditional industrial and commercial sectors such as manufacturing, transportation, and wholesale trade has fallen to a fraction of the level of 30 years ago. As recently as the 1970's the loft buildings of Printing House Row still housed printing presses, and men's suits were manufactured in the West Loop. All of these buildings have since been torn down or converted to residential or other uses.

FUTURE NEEDS

Despite these changes, industrial land continues to have an important role to play in the Central Area. Downtown businesses are leading consumers of warehousing and distribution services, including overnight package delivery, document storage, printing and binding, food and janitorial services, vehicle depots, and parts distribution. The continuing high rate of downtown construction requires convenient staging areas and building materials transshipment points. The projected growth of the office core and the restaurant and entertainment sector will create additional demand for warehousing and distribution services over the next 20 years.

RETAINING INDUSTRIAL LAND

Goose Island, the Kinzie Industrial Corridor and Pilsen are important centers for distribution, warehousing, and related uses, with rising employment and land prices and low vacancy rates. The Pilsen industrial corridor currently has 186 companies and 11,000 jobs, up from 8,500 jobs in 1998.

As existing industrial properties are converted to other uses, those remaining become increasingly precious. Planned manufacturing districts have been established to preserve industrial areas. The remaining sizable reservoirs of industrial space in the Central Area are:

- the Chicago-Halsted Planned Manufacturing District (PMD), which is anchored by the Tribune Company's Freedom Center printing plant
- the Canal-Desplaines corridor south of Harrison Street. Buffered by railroad tracks on the east and the Dan Ryan Expressway on the west, this corridor is ideal for continued industrial use.

Projected Growth: In the area bounded by Ashland, North Avenue, Lake Michigan and the Stevenson Expressway, there are currently 933 acres of industrial land, containing 272 businesses and 15,590 jobs. To serve the growing downtown business core, it is critical to preserve a minimum of 933 acres for continued industrial, warehousing and distribution use.

Ensuring Capacity: Utilities

Existing high and low-tech utility service provides the Central Area with a clear advantage over competing business centers

ELECTRIC POWER

Commonwealth Edison is engaged in a multibillion dollar upgrade of its Chicago power distribution grid, with emphasis on the Central Area. To maintain consistent service as demand for power grows, the upgraded system will feature additional substations and greater interconnection between nodes to provide back-up connections. Completion of major substation projects in the optimization program is set for 2007.

The City of Chicago will implement its Energy Management Plan to make Chicago the nation's smartest energy manager, encouraging renewable energy and energy efficient new residential and office construction.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Central Area is well positioned to take advantage of developments in communications technology, notably fiber optics:

- The nation's network of fiber optic cable has been developed primarily along rail rights-of-way, which converge on downtown Chicago. Lines extend throughout downtown using the existing freight tunnels. Numerous operators are actively laying fiber downtown.
- The Central Loop and East Loop are most densely served by the existing fiber network. Fiber is also following the market into the West Loop, South Loop and other areas.
- The fiber optic system will be anchored by a network of telecom hotels, which provide an alternative to the traditional hub-and-spoke (copper wiring) system. One telecom hotel has been built and one is currently under construction.

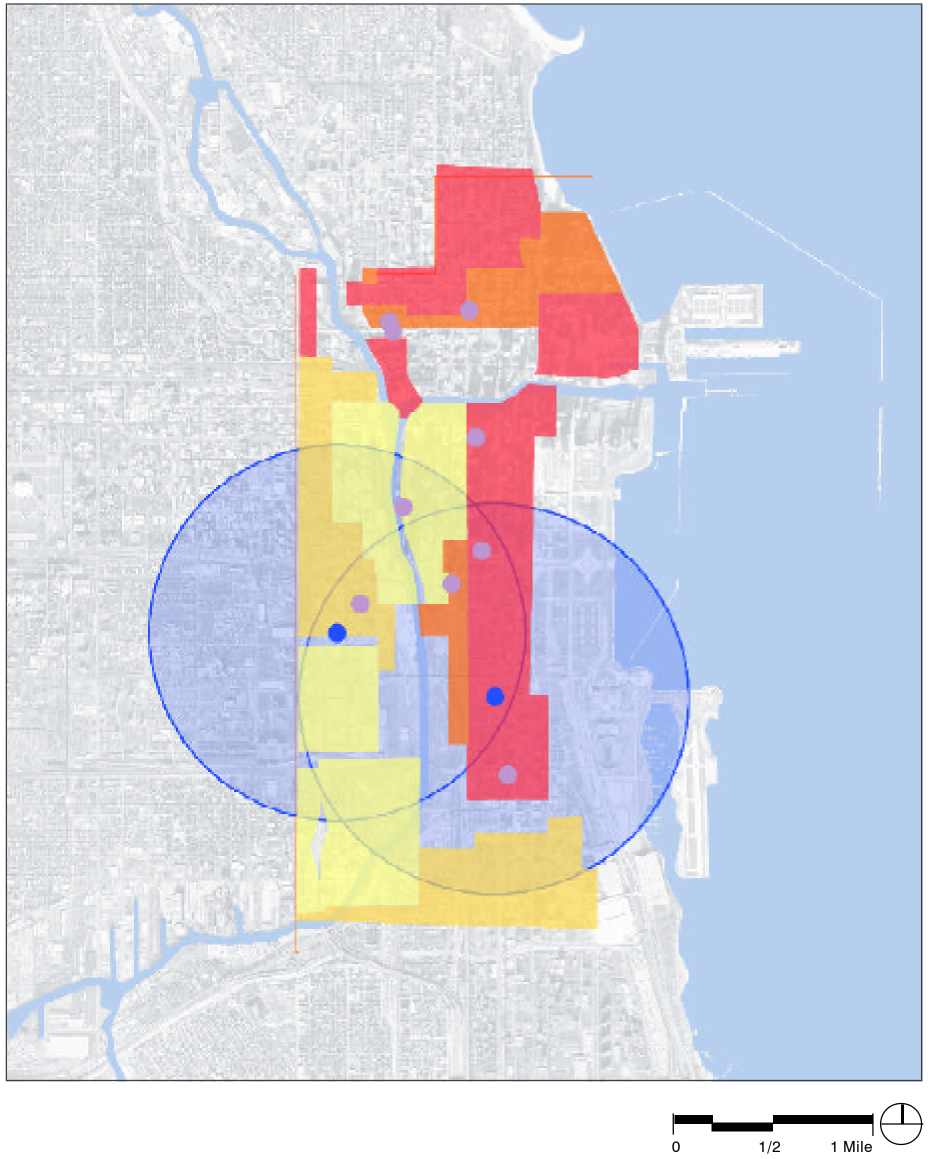

Figure 2.28
Commonwealth Edison is engaged in a multibillion dollar upgrade of its Chicago power distribution grid, with emphasis on the Central Area.

Projected Peak Loads for Substations
🟥 > 95% of capacity
🟧 81 - 95%
🟨 66 - 80%
🟨 50 - 65 %
● Existing substation
● Future substation with projected service area

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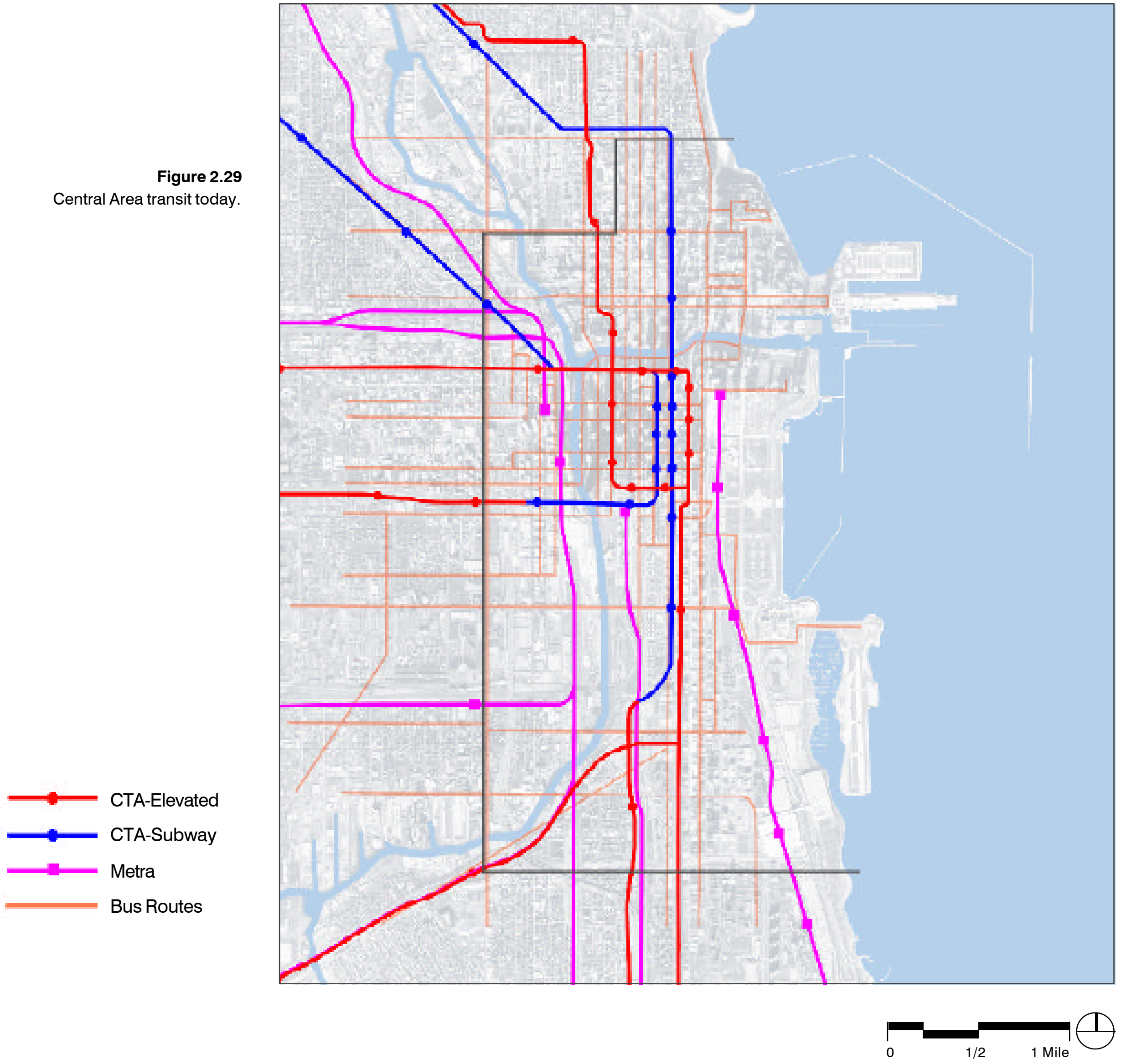
CTA-Elevated
CTA-Subway
Metra
Bus Routes
0
1/2
1 Mile

Figure 2.29
Central Area transit today.

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Getting To and Around the Central Area: The Key Role of Transportation

Growth in the downtown workforce will result in 166,000 to 240,000 additional inbound work trips, an increase of 28% to 41%.

Chicago developed as the transportation hub of the Midwest, first because of its river, lake and canal connections, and next as the nation's railroad center. Commuter rail and the Chicago Transit Authority's rapid transit and bus systems have made it a regional hub, bringing thousands of people to work, shop and play daily. The exceptional transportation infrastructure of the Central Area makes it the ideal place in the region for growth.

CURRENT ASSESSMENT

Currently, 53% of inbound work trips to the Central Area use public transit. The Loop has the most convenient transit access and the most expensive parking – therefore, more people ride transit to work in the Loop than to other Central Area neighborhoods.

More than 39% of Central Area workers arrive by automobile, while just over 7% walk or use alternative transportation modes.

ACCOMMODATING GROWTH

Growth scenarios call for expanding inbound work trips by 28 to 41%. It is critical for Chicago's air quality, economic success and quality of life that a high percentage of these trips use public transit, or alternative modes such as walking or bicycling. Existing roadway capacity is limited, and creating additional or expanded rights-of-way is cost prohibitive and would have adverse environmental impact. The Chicago Department of Transportation's (CDOT) analyses indicate that a significant increase in downtown auto traffic during morning and evening peak periods will result in severe congestion.

Projected growth

CDOT assumes that, conservatively, 58% of workers in 2020 will use mass transit, adding 116,000 to 167,000 new inbound riders – an increase of 38% to 55% above current peak load. This would require an additional 120 to 200 CTA buses, increased CTA rapid transit capacity, and 27-45 new peak hour Metra commuter trains.

Figures 2.30 and 2.31

Today, CTA rail and bus and Metra commuter rail accounts for 53% of inbound work trips. As the Central Area grows, it is critical to increase the use of public transit, walking and alternative modes of transportation in order to avoid gridlock, protect air quality and keep the Central Area livable.

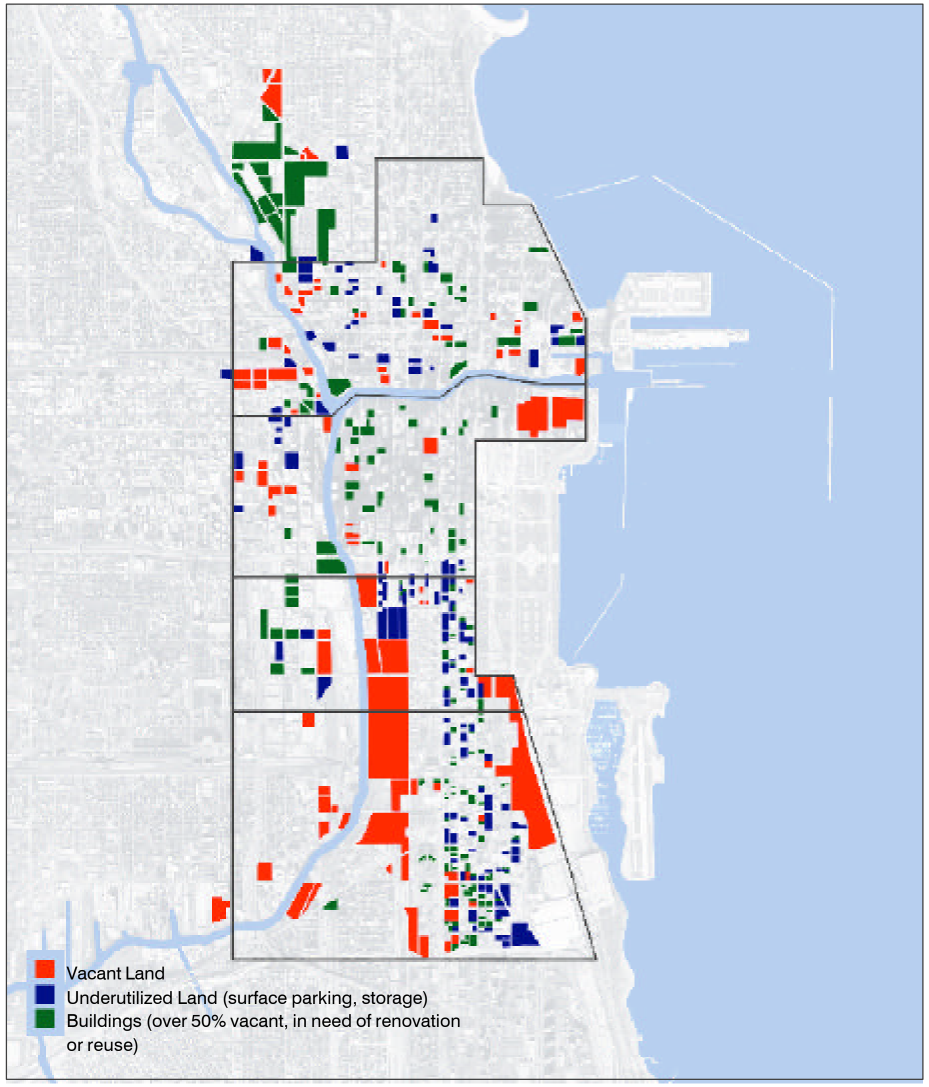
🟥 Vacant Land
🟦 Underutilized Land (surface parking, storage)
🟩 Buildings (over 50% vacant, in need of renovation or reuse)
0
1/2
1 Mile

Figure 2.32
Opportunities for Development, 2001-2020

Table 2.7
Allocation of Market Demand by Sector and District

	Study Area Districts					
	Near North	Loop W. of River	Loop E. of River	South Loop	Near South	Total
Percent of Market Demand (Sq. Ft.)						
Office	11%	26%	60%	3%	n/a	100%
Retail	35%	9%	14%	17%	25%	100%
Residential	30%	2.5%	7.5%	15%	45%	100%
Cultural	10%	4%	36%	35%	15%	100%
Convention/Conference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	100%
Post Secondary Education	7%	1.5%	35%	53%	3.5%	100%
Hotel	55%	5%	30%	10%	n/a	100%
BASE DEMAND SCENARIO -AVERAGE ANNUAL ACREAGE DEMAND						
Market Segments						
Office	0.3	0.6	0.9	0.2	n/a	2.00
Retail	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.7	2.40
Residential	1.0	0.1	0.4	1.0	4.4	6.90
Cultural	0.05	0.02	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.57
Convention/Conference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.60	0.60
Post Secondary Education	0.01	0.003	0.10	0.30	0.02	0.43
Hotel	0.2	0.03	0.1	0.1	n/a	0.43
TOTAL Avg. Annual Demand Increase (acres)	**2**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**6**	**13**
20 Year Acreage Demand	40	20	40	40	120	260
Total Year 2000 Land Supply (acres)	87	28	58	122	262	557
Build-out by District (years)	**44**	**28**	**29**	**61**	**44**	**43**
OPPORTUNITY DEMAND SCENARIO - AVERAGE ANNUAL ACREAGE DEMAND						
Market Segments						
Office	0.5	0.8	1.3	0.2	n/a	2.80
Retail	0.9	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.0	3.20
Residential	1.5	0.2	0.5	1.5	6.2	9.90
Cultural	0.06	0.02	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.58
Convention/Conference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.80	0.80
Post Secondary Education	0.02	0.004	0.10	0.40	0.02	0.55
Hotel	0.3	0.04	0.2	0.1	n/a	0.64
TOTAL Avg. Annual Demand Increase *(acres)*	**3**	**1**	**3**	**3**	**8**	**18**
20 Year Acreage Demand	60	20	60	60	160	360
Total Year 2000 Land Supply (acres)	87	28	58	122	262	557
Build-out by District (years)	**29**	**28**	**19**	**41**	**33**	**31**

Source: Arthur Andersen LLP, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill LLP, Goodman Williams Group, and City of Chicago, Dept. of Planning

Revised May 21, 2001

Opportunities for Growth

The Central Area has sufficient land to accommodate future development, but it is critical to direct specific types of growth to appropriate districts to create an economically successful, vibrant city. Figure 2.31 shows opportunities for development, and Table 2.7 shows the demand for land by market segment under base and opportunity scenarios. The priorities in directing this growth will be to build upon the strengths of the Central Area's districts, focusing each use into those locations that have the appropriate level of access, compatible existing uses, and will promote quality of life.

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE CENTRAL AREA

Vacant land, under-utilized land, obsolete and under-occupied buildings combine to offer the opportunity to develop 207 million square feet of new space by 2020.

New development is expected to restore and reuse many older buildings and find creative new uses for historic landmarks throughout the Central Area.

The largest land development opportunities are at former rail yard and industrial sites to the east, south and northwest of the Loop. Underutilized land is concentrated in the South Michigan-Wabash and State street corridor and also found in the South Loop, West Loop and the Near North. The Loop offers larger opportunities for renovation or redevelopment of obsolete or vacant buildings and the sites they stand on. Smaller renovation and redevelopment opportunities are offered in all of the Central Area districts. Development opportunities for service, distribution and light industry exist in planned manufacturing districts and industrial corridors.

THE DEMAND FOR LAND IN THE CENTRAL AREA

The Central Area's various market sectors have sought out locations where infrastructure, amenities and compatible neighbors make their success possible. Demand for office space is greatest in areas adjacent to the existing office core and near public transit, while residential demand is greatest beyond it. Retailers seek out each other, knowing they each benefit from a known shopping destination. Education institutions have developed a shared recognition of the value of older office buildings for their own needs. Distribution and industrial uses are critical to support the growing business district, and land is being reserved for these in industrial corridors and planned manufacturing districts.

Demand for land and space varies by sector in the Near North, the South Loop and Near South side. The Central Area's current land uses indicate clear concentrations by sector. However, a tremendous diversity and mix of uses can be found in each of the Central Area's districts, creating strong places as well as a strong economy.

OFFICE GROWTH : SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

At first glance, there appears to be ample room for growth. Under the most land-intensive scenario, 360 acres would be required through 2020. Currently 555 acres are available. Sizable tracts are available for residential and mixed-used development.

However, land suitable for high-density office development is limited. Under the most land-intensive scenario, office development will consume 62 acres through 2020. A location convenient to transit lines serving both city and suburbs is essential. Relatively little land remains in the traditional central business district.

The prospects for expansion of the office core north, south and east are limited. The North Michigan Avenue corridor and the East Loop saw weak office demand during the 1990's because they were not convenient to the West Loop commuter stations. Efforts to establish a speculative market for "back office" space south of Congress thus far have not been successful. As a result, the office core has expanded toward the west. Approximately 45% of recent projects have been built in the West Loop and west of the river.

The widely-held view in the development community is that more projects would be built west of the river if the zoning permitted higher density. Currently, the maximum permissible density in much of this district is relatively low, reflecting its industrial past. If greater density were permitted and new transit facilities provided, an estimated 30 percent of projected office demand could be accommodated west of the river.

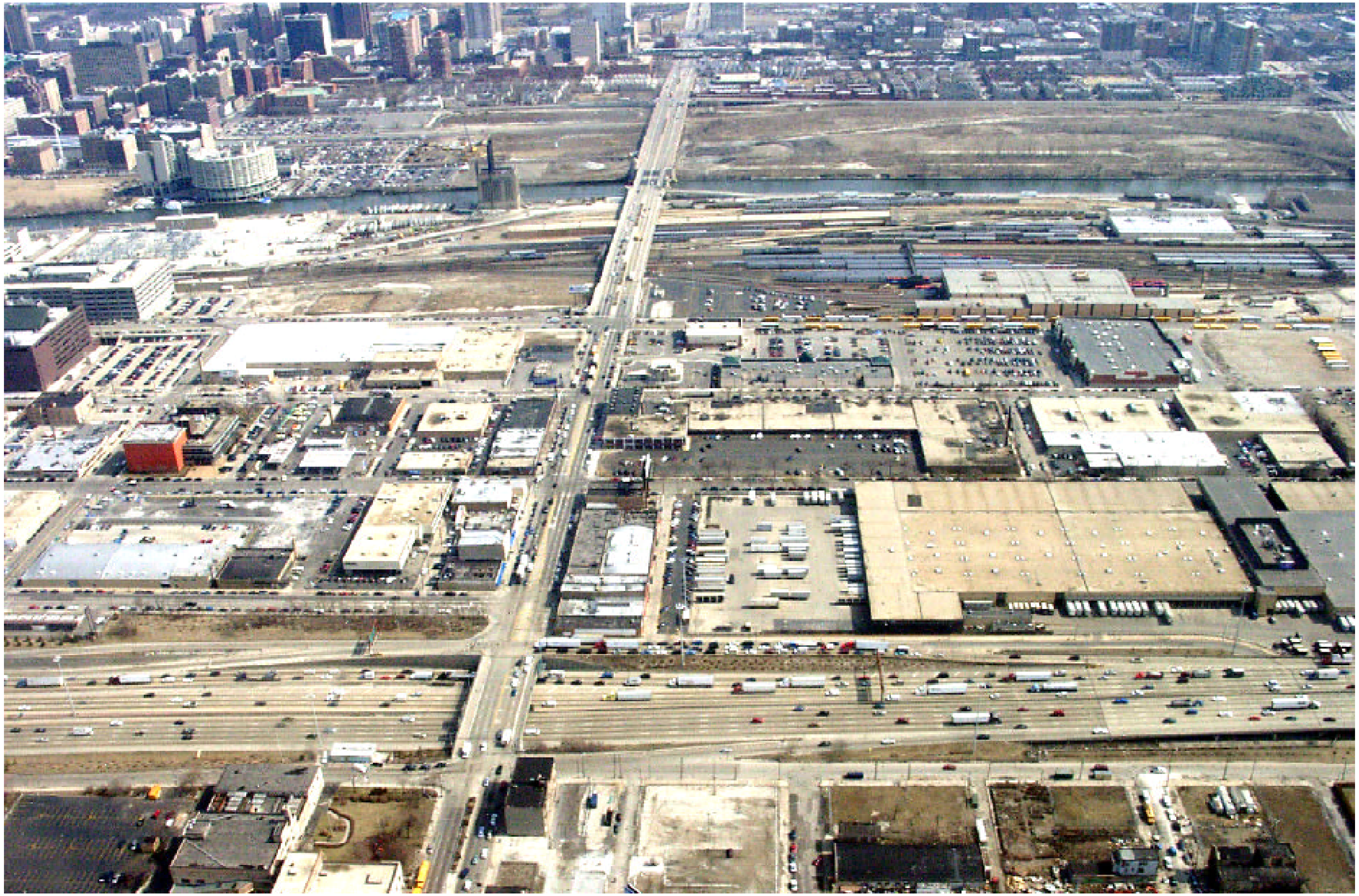

Figure 2.33
The South Loop and the Near South provide great opportunities for future residential and retail developments as well as continued rail oriented uses.
(View of Roosevelt Road Corridor looking east)

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CHAPTER 3

Vision and Guiding Themes

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The Vision

Chicago's Central Area has experienced extraordinary growth since 1980 and faces equally profound changes in the decades to come. By 2020 Chicago's Central Area will be:

A Vision for Chicago's Central Area in 2020

GLOBAL CHICAGO

One of the World's Great Crossroads Cities

Chicago will retain its role as one of the world's great crossroads cities, attracting businesses, residents and visitors internationally. Its Central Area will be a preeminent international meeting place, easily accessible from major destinations around the globe via expanded O'Hare International and Midway Airports.

Chicago's Central Area will remain the dominant business center in the interior of the United States. It will be the choice for companies seeking a world or U.S. headquarters site with a high quality work force, a supportive business environment, excellent transportation and infrastructure, convenient access to national and world markets, and an exceptional quality of life.

REGIONAL CHICAGO

Downtown of the Midwest

The Central Area will be the "Downtown of the Midwest," the region's first choice for business, retailing, and entertainment. It will be a leading tourist destination, sought out for its cultural attractions, magnificent architecture, lively street and night life, and fine restaurants and shops. It will be a magnet for the best and brightest among the region's young people, who will enrich the city with their creativity, enthusiasm, and hard work. Its regional role will be strengthened as high speed rail is introduced into the Midwest.

HOME TOWN CHICAGO

The Heart of Chicagoland

Downtown Chicago will offer an urban living experience matched by only a handful of cities in North America, with outstanding access to cultural opportunities and the excitement of city life without sacrificing security, convenience, or a sense of community. It will support economic and social diversity. It will embody a great city's capacity to awe and charm, to entertain, and to enlighten. The Central Area will remain the heart of the metropolitan area, the place where Chicagoans gather for celebrations. It will also be a place that reflects its great architectural legacy, with a clear commitment to preserving the best of its buildings and public spaces.

GREEN CHICAGO

The Greenest City in the United States

Chicago's Central Area will be a model of sustainability for America and the world in the 21st Century. It will exemplify a commitment to transit first, be a smart energy manager, bring the use of renewable power and green technologies to the fore in new buildings, lead in the sensitive management of waste, and rebuild the bio-diversity of its open spaces, river and lakefront.

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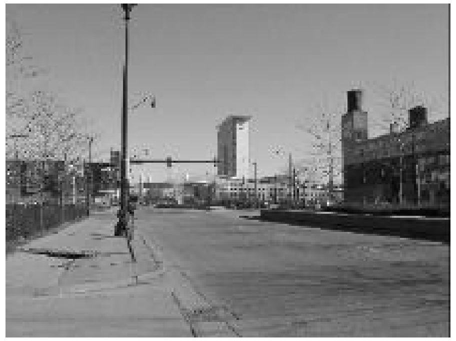

Figure 3.1
Cermak Road today

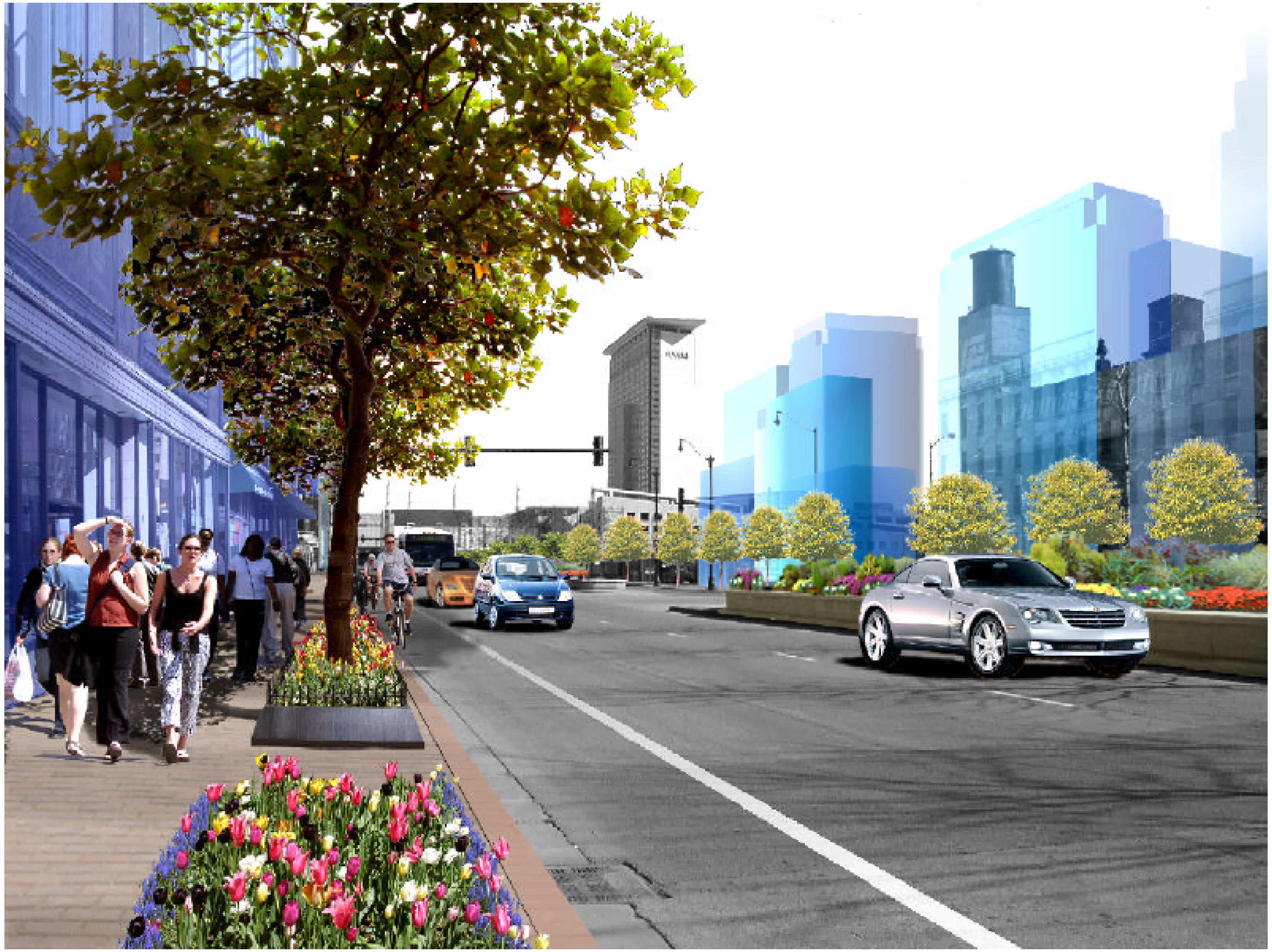

Figure 3.2
Cermak Road will become a higher density corridor connecting McCormick Place, Motor Row, Chinatown and the new neighborhoods in the Near South Side district.

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The Guiding Themes

The guiding themes for Chicago's Central Area serve as the "rules of the plan." They provide a basis for future development and a framework for making decisions.

Theme 1
Development Framework

Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant and diverse mixed-use urban districts

- Extend the highest density office core into the West Loop around transit stations, services and the Chicago River
- Develop high-density, mixed-use corridors which extend from the expanded Loop and are linked to transit
- Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places
- Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage
- Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts
- Direct the growth of the Central Area's educational institutions and provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

Theme 2
Transportation

Strengthen transportation connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around

- Make transit the first choice for people coming to the Central Area
- Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment
- Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock
- Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis
- Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.
- Improve national and international connections.

Theme 3
Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect waterfronts and open spaces to create great public places.

- Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

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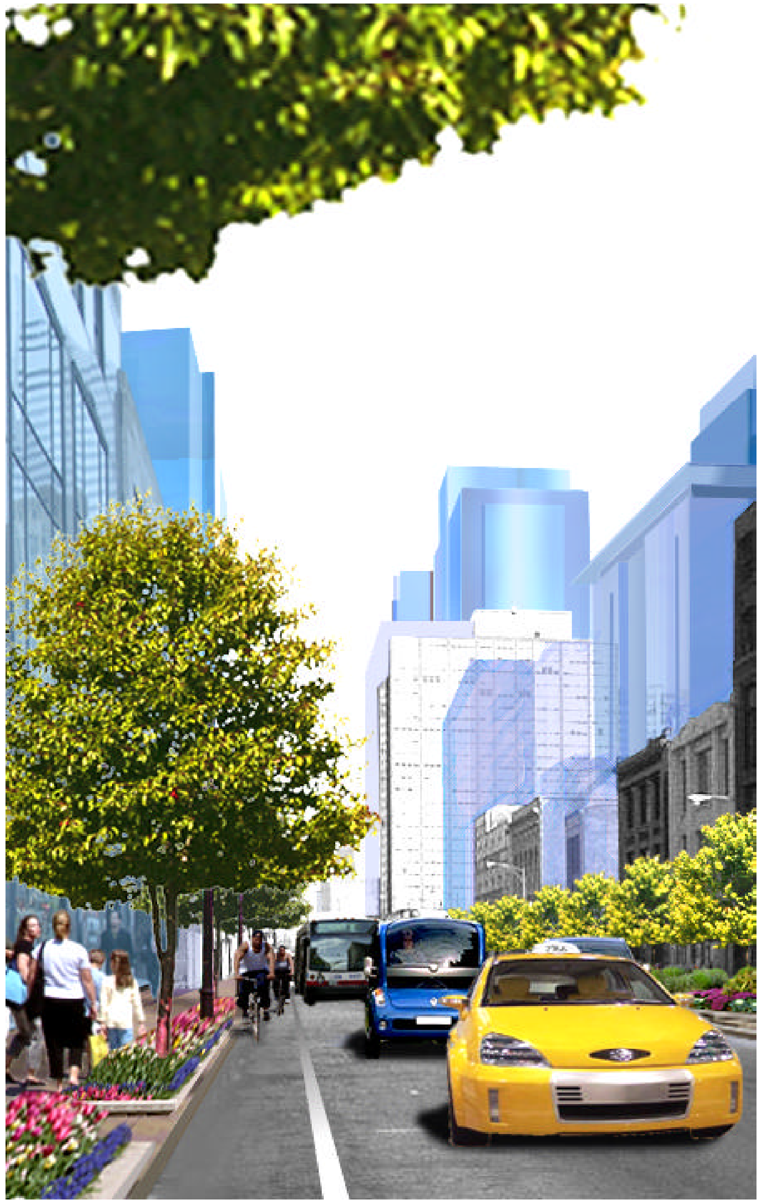

Figure 3.3
Encourage the development of a new generation of energy efficient buildings and infrastructure.

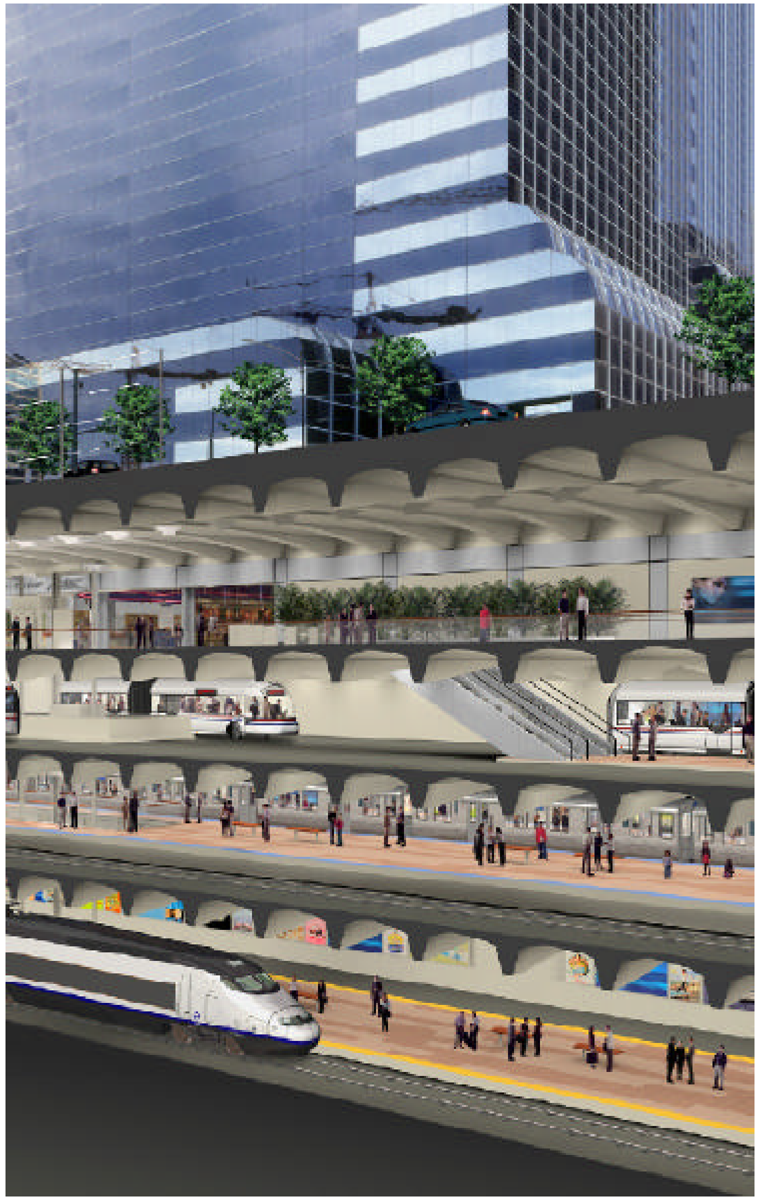

Figure 3.4
Ensure transit and inter-city access to the Central Area to provide a clear alternative to driving.

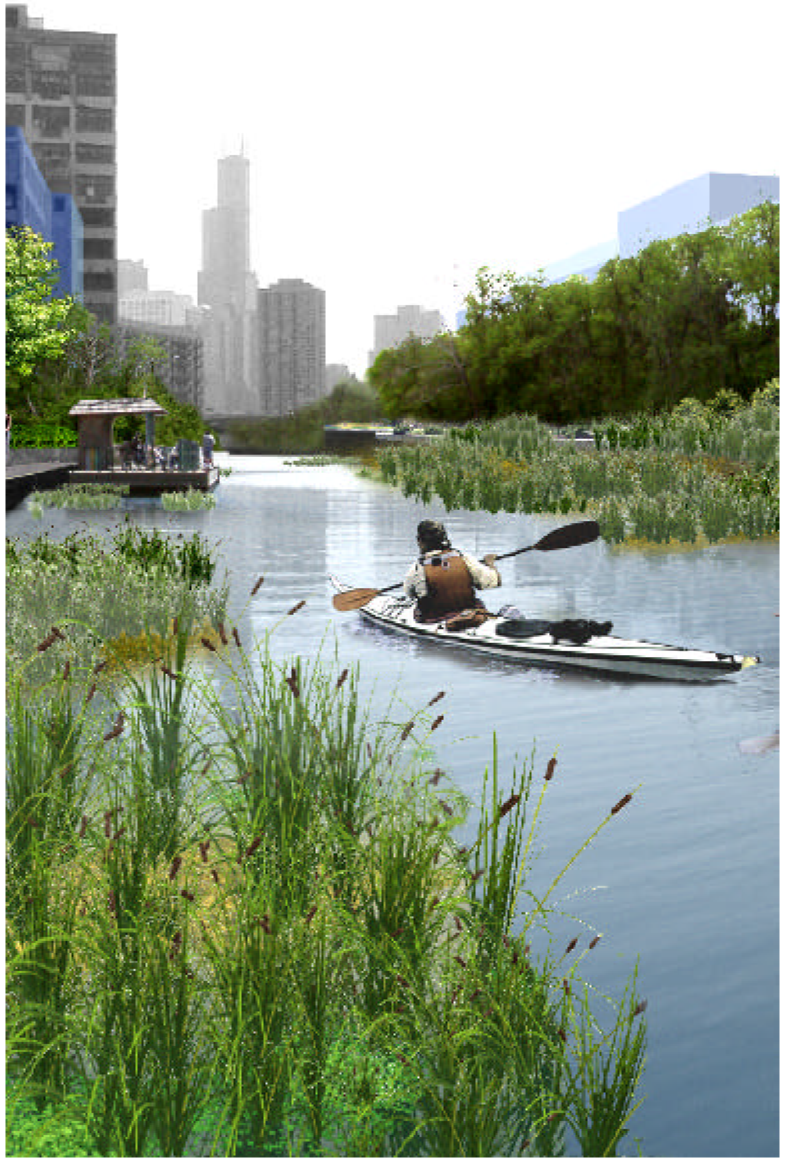

Figure 3.5
Create new parks, greenways and a continuous riverwalk.

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Green Chicago: A Commitment to the Environment

The Greenest City in the Nation

Almost 100 years ago, the Commercial Club of Chicago published the Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago, launching a series of improvements that gave Chicago international standing for the quality of its civic realm. This plan offers a new prospect: a Central Area with international standing for the quality of its urban environment. The Central Area will stand as a model of the relationship between environmental and economic sustainability. It will be a beautiful central city with high quality air, water and land, and a place where people will want to invest, work, play and live.

REGIONAL BENEFITS

The three fundamental goals of this plan – directing growth to a central city comprised of dynamic mixed-use districts; emphasizing transit; and creating and enhancing open spaces and waterfronts – are part of a broader environmental policy with direct benefits to the region. This plan allows the region to:

- Make the most efficient use of the region's land, support already urbanized areas and preserve open space and agricultural land at the region's edge by limiting sprawl.
- Maximize the value of existing infrastructure and reduce regional expenditures on new infrastructure.
- Support transportation efficiency and improve air quality by allowing more people to walk, bike and ride transit to work.

DEVELOPMENT: MANAGE LAND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Develop mixed-use walkable districts with good transit access.

- Reduce dependence on cars by allowing people to live within walking distance or a short transit trip to work, shopping and entertainment.

Increase recycling and material recovery.

Promote Environmental remediation.

- Clean up environmentally challenged sites and bring them back to active, productive use.
- Encourage the use of clean and renewable power and alternative energy sources.

Energy Efficiency

- Implement Chicago's citywide energy code to reduce energy use, improve energy efficiency, lower operating costs and reduce emissions.
- Take the lead by retrofitting City of Chicago owned buildings with energy saving equipment and installing solar panels.

Encourage the development of a new generation of energy efficient, resource conserving buildings and infrastructure in the Central Area.

- Promote environmentally sound "green design" and construction of new buildings following Green Building standards to conserve energy, water and resources
- Promote the use of recyclable materials, and create healthy indoor environments.
- Lead by example by implementing green design in the construction and operation of new City facilities.

TRANSPORTATION: REDUCE DEPENDANCE ON CARS

- Locate job growth at the center of the regional transportation system to support transportation efficiency and allow more people to ride transit to work.
- Ensure transit and inter-city access to the Central Area to provide a clear alternative to driving.
- Increase the number of alternative fuel transit vehicles to reduce pollutant emissions.
- Encourage walking, with pedestrian-friendly streets, greenways and open spaces.
- Encourage bicycling with bicycle-friendly streets, bike paths and secure bicycle storage facilities.
- Limit downtown parking to prevent gridlock and improve air quality.

OPEN SPACE AND WATERFRONTS: THE GREEN LANDSCAPE

The plan promotes:

- Create new parks, greenways and a continuous riverwalk.
- Expand streetscape and infrastructure greening.
- Encourage community greening of neighborhood parks, gardens and schools.
- Encourage rooftop gardens and planted balconies to reduce "urban heat islands."
- Restore natural habitats along waterfronts and open spaces.

Waterfronts and Water Quality

- Make the Lakefront and the Chicago River models for nature-based recreation and environmental education.
- Restore fishable and swimmable water to the Chicago River by 2020.
- Implement good storm water management in the Central Area to help to clean river and lake water. New approaches to storm water control include green rooftops, wetlands restoration, swales, filters, trenches and detention basins at river and lake edges.
- Reconstruct river edges to ensure safe access to the water, while preserving valuable natural, historical and aesthetic features, and creating improvements that are friendly to paddlers.
- Support habitat continuity through the development of a greenway and waterway network that promotes wildlife survival and movement.
- Support bio-diversity through natural approaches to landscaping.
- Encourage residents to become stewards of the environment by educating them about the river, lake, land and conservation.

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Chapter 4 : THEME 1

Development Framework

Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant, mixed-use districts

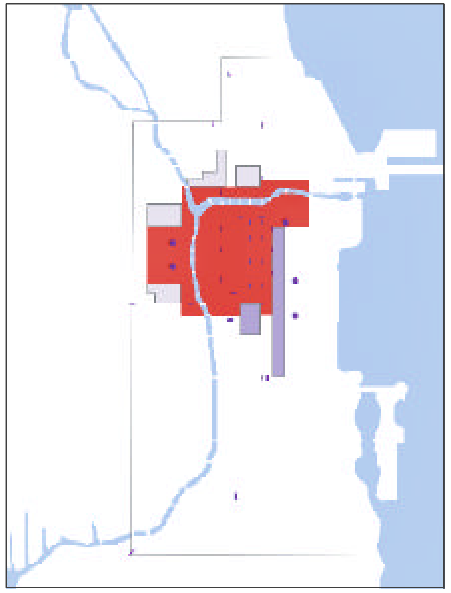

Figure 4.1.1 The Expanded Loop

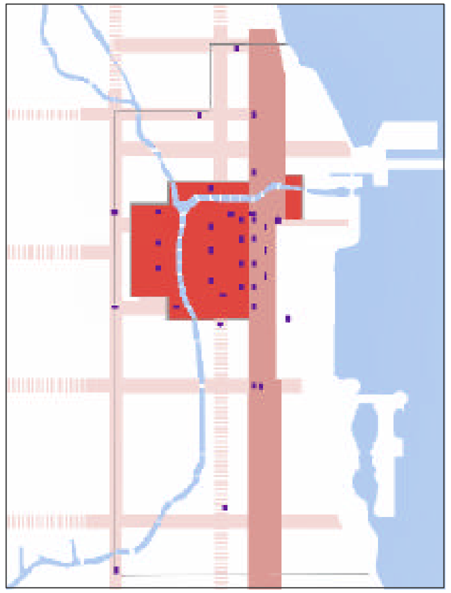

Fig. 4.1.2 High-Density, Mixed-Use Corridors

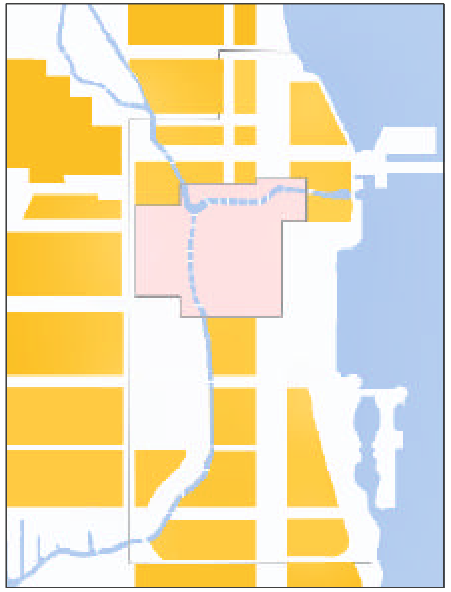

Fig. 4.1.3 Neighborhoods and Special Places

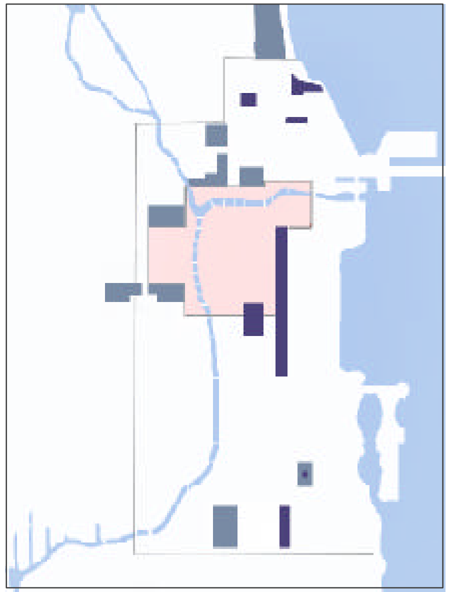

Fig. 4.1.4 Landmark and Character Districts

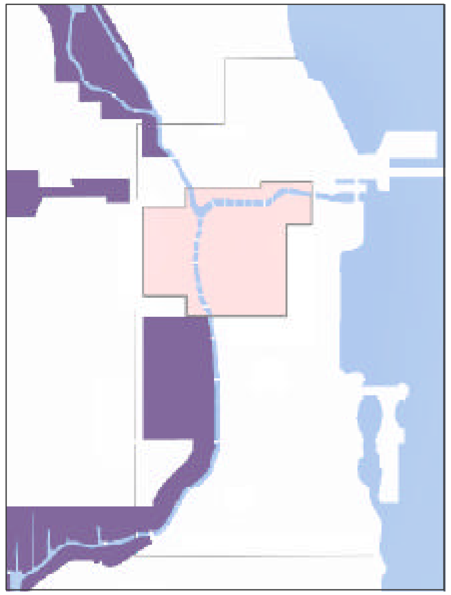

Fig. 4.1.5 Industrial Districts and Corridors

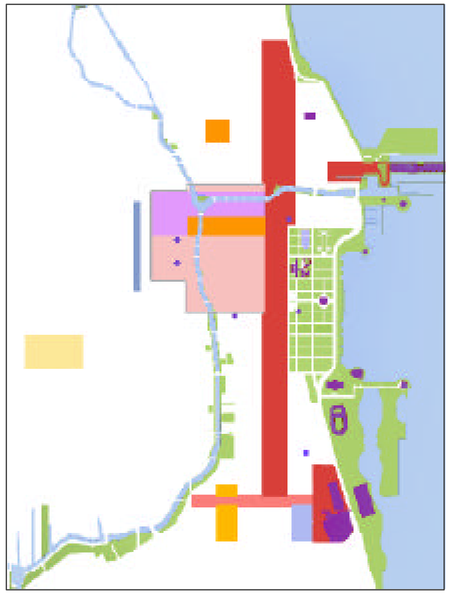

Fig. 4.1.6 Cultural Attractions and Tourist Destinations

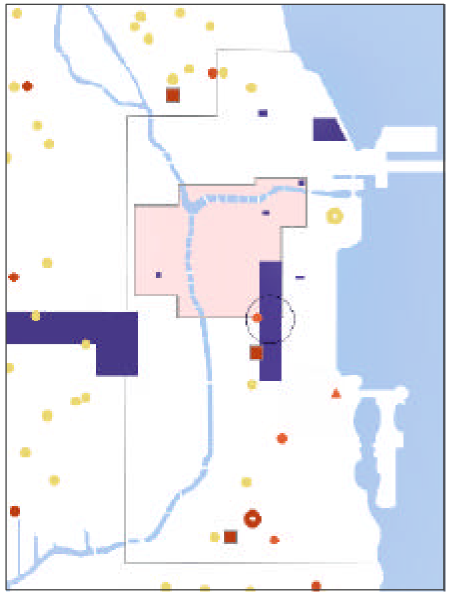

Fig. 4.1.7 Education and Learning

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Theme 1
Development Framework

Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant, mixed-use urban districts

Guiding Principles

- **THE EXPANDED LOOP**
  Extend the highest density office core into the West Loop around transit stations, services and the Chicago River
- **HIGH-DENSITY, MIXED-USE CORRIDORS**
  Develop high-density, mixed-use corridors which extend from the expanded Loop and are served by transit
- **NEIGHBORHOODS AND SPECIAL PLACES**
  Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places
- **LANDMARKS AND CHARACTER DISTRICTS**
  Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage
- **INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS**
  Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts
- **EDUCATION AND LEARNING**
  Direct the growth of the Central Area's educational institutions and provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- **CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS AND TOURIST DESTINATIONS**
  Promote and strengthen the Central Area’s world-class cultural assets

The substantial growth projected for the Central Area requires a development framework to ensure that it remains a desirable office address and is livable, convenient and attractive. The following sections describe a framework that organizes the general land uses found in the Central Area and the special uses that contribute to the area's vitality.

See Chapter 6 for an overview of how the development framework should be used to inform the City of Chicago's ongoing Zoning Reform project.

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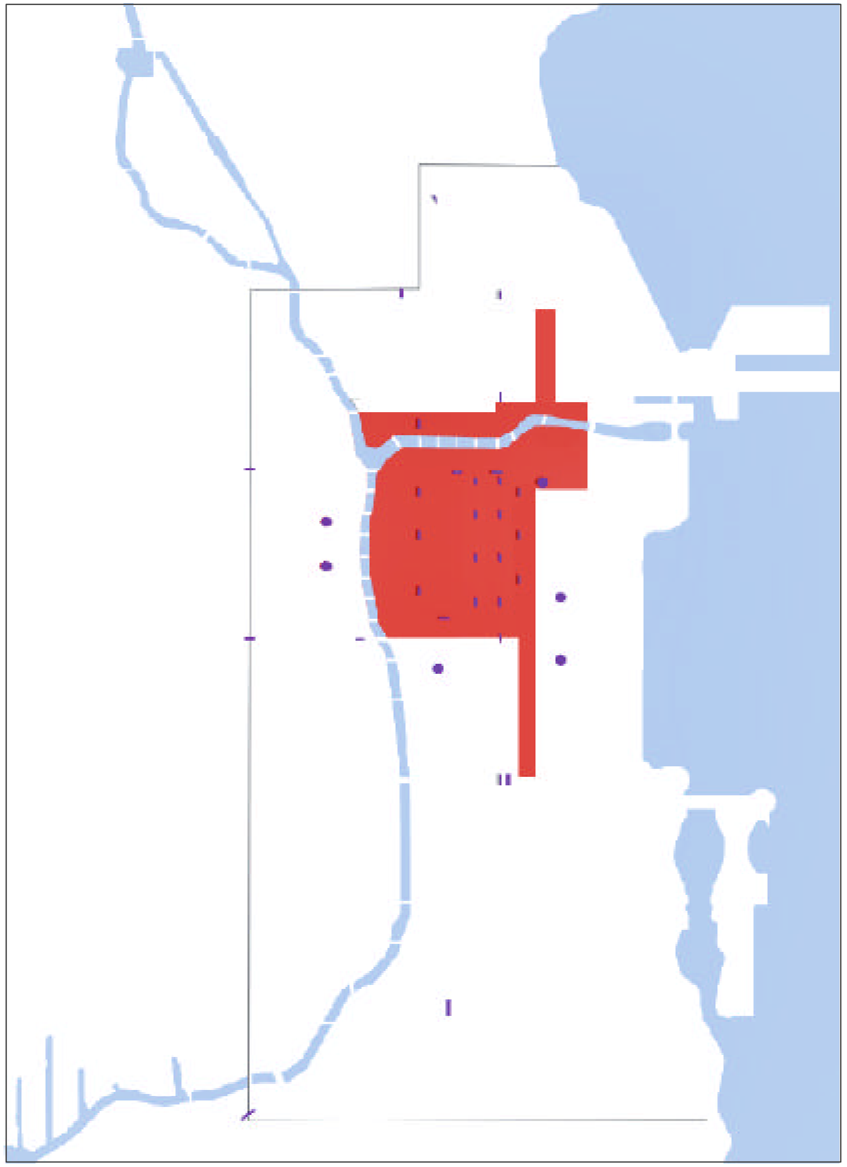

Figure 4.1.8a
The Higher-Density Zoning Defines Today's Loop

The Central Area's high-density mixed-use core should expand to the west and be framed by character districts

- Extend the high-density Loop to the west around transit opportunities
- Emphasize office, hotels & related commercial uses
- Emphasize active retail and commercial services at the street level
- Emphasize the Loop as a single, dense, walkable office core based on transit
- De-emphasize housing, except in the East Loop
- Explore minimum as well as maximum densities
- Minimize parking

🟥 The Expanded Loop
🟪 Landmark Districts
⬜ Character Districts
● Metra Station
▮ CTA Station

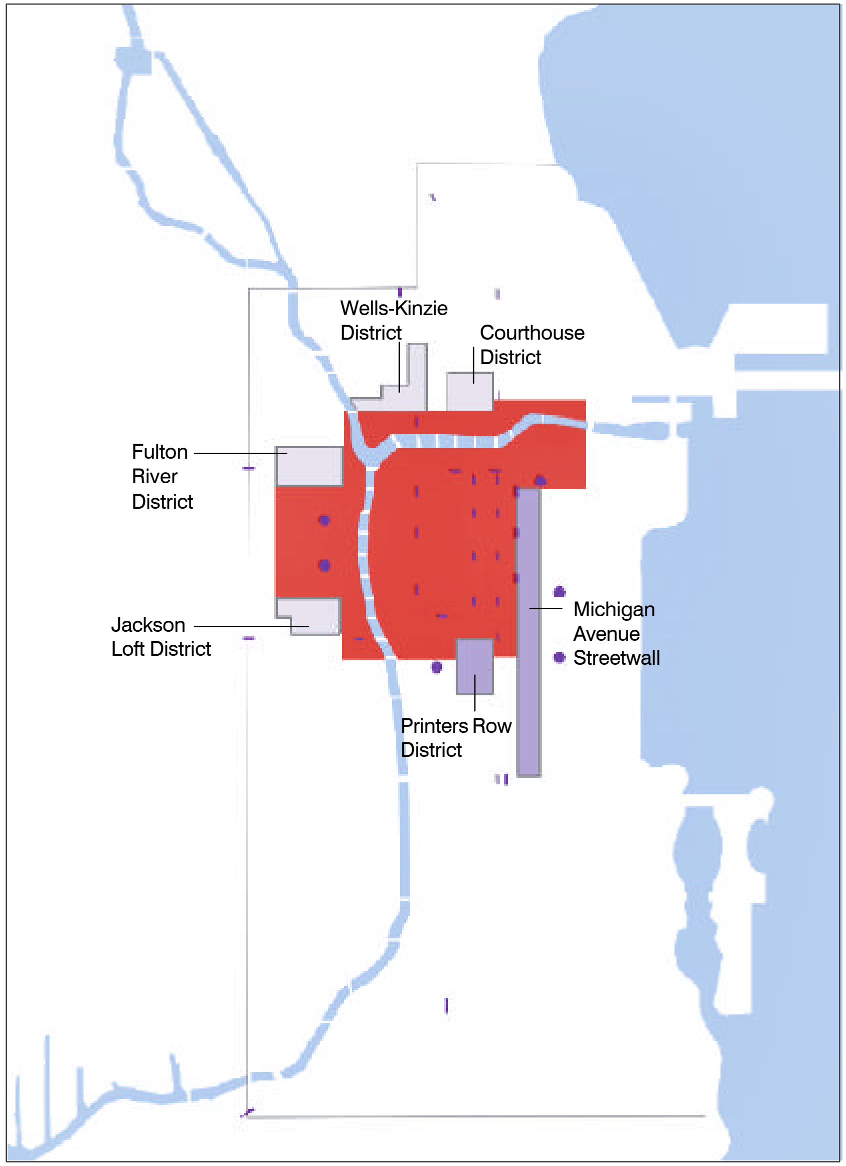
Wells-Kinzie District
Courthouse District
Fulton River District
Jackson Loft District
Michigan Avenue Streetwall
Printers Row District
0
1/4
1/2
1 Mile

Figure 4.1.8b
The proposed Expanded Loop

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The Expanded Loop

Extend the highest-density office core West to the Kennedy Expressway around the transit stations and the Chicago River

Key Recommendations:

- **Strengthen the Loop as a single, dense, walkable office core that is well-served by transit**
- **Emphasize office, hotels & related commercial uses in the West Loop and the Central Loop**
- **De-emphasize residential development in the Central Loop and the West Loop**
- **Promote mixed-use, cultural use and innovative adaptive reuse in the East Loop**
- **Promote historic preservation throughout the Loop**
- **Develop active retail and commercial services at the street level**
- **Emphasize the pedestrian environment**

Approximately 60% of new office development can be accommodated within the existing central Loop business district from Dearborn Street to the Chicago River. In order to accommodate and attract additional growth while retaining the advantages of a single, dense, walkable business district served by transit, the Loop will expand west to the Kennedy Expressway.

The development emphasis in the West and Central Loop will be office, ground floor retail, hotel and related commercial uses. Although the West and Central Loop are primarily intended to accommodate new office development, vertically mixed-uses will be encouraged. Single-use residential buildings will be deemphasized.

The growth of the Loop will be supported by increasing permissible densities in the West Loop. The expanded Loop will embrace the Chicago River. It will also be framed by historic areas: the recently designated Michigan Avenue Streetwall, Printer's Row, the Jackson and Fulton Loft Districts, the Wells-Kinzie District and the Courthouse District.

The emphasis in the East Loop will be mixed-use and smaller tenants. The City of Chicago is committed to preserving the area's historic buildings and districts and traditional east loop businesses.

Expansion of the high-density office core west of the river offers many advantages:

1. PROXIMITY TO THE WEST LOOP TRANSIT STATIONS

Most of the area between the river and the Kennedy Expressway is within easy walking distance of Metra commuter rail terminals and two CTA stations. Minimal investment in transit would be required to distribute workers. The West Loop's direct access from the Kennedy Expressway also strengthens its attractiveness as a strong Class A office address.

2. PROXIMITY TO THE EXISTING CORE

The compactness of the Loop has always been one of its great advantages as a place to do business - any point is within a short walk, bus or cab ride of any other point. Despite expansion, the Loop remains a more convenient place for meetings than suburban business centers and the downtowns of most other cities. The addition of the adjacent West Loop to the core would extend these efficiencies and competitive advantages while maintaining compactness.

3. COST-EFFECTIVE TRANSIT INVESTMENT

Chicago's century-old commitment to transit will continue. The high-density business district has the critical mass of workers needed to support convenient mass transit. The ability of mass transit to deliver large numbers of workers to the core in turn makes density viable.

4. EFFICIENT USE OF LAND

High densities are an efficient use of land, transit and infrastructure. The office growth projected for the next 20 years, 32 to 44 million square feet, will be accommodated in the approximately 1 square mile of the Expanded Loop. In comparison, if the amount of projected office growth were developed at typical suburban office densities (0.3 FAR), the office space alone would require at least 4 square miles of land. Additional land would be required to support the necessary infrastructure improvements.

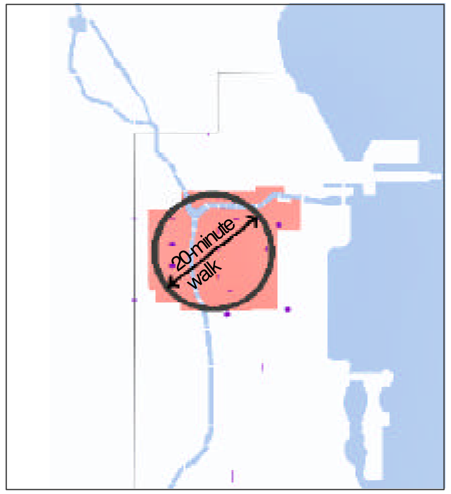

Figure 4.1.9
Pedestrians can cross the Expanded Loop in 20 minutes.

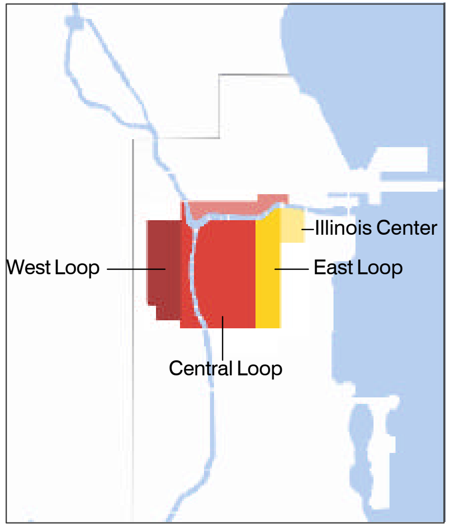

Figure 4.1.10
The Expanded Loop consists of the West Loop, the Central Loop, the East Loop, and Illinois Center.

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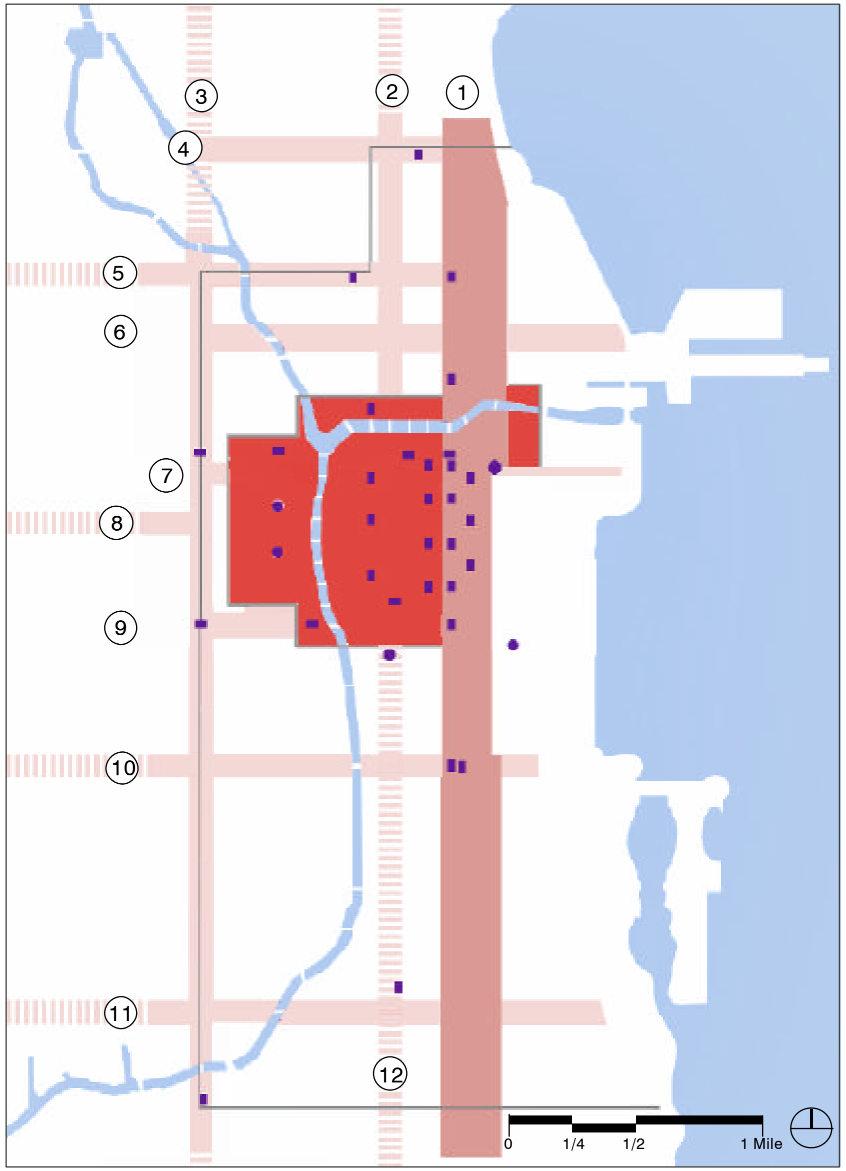
Dense Mixed-Use Corridors

Figure 4.1.11
Dense, Mixed-Use Corridors will be a focus for new residential and retail development with secondary office and other uses. They will be community centers served by public transit.



PROPOSED CENTRAL AREA HIGH-DENSITY MIXED-USE CORRIDORS

1. Michigan-Wabash-State
2. La Salle Street
3. Halsted Street
4. Division Street
5. Chicago Avenue
6. Ohio - Ontario
7. Randolph Street
8. Madison Street
9. Congress Parkway
10. Roosevelt Road
11. Cermak Road
12. Future Wentworth Connection

■ Highest density corridor
□ High density corridors
🟥 The Expanded Loop
● Metra Station
■ CTA Station

Develop high density, mixed-use corridors which extend throughout the Central Area

Key Recommendations:

- **Focus transit improvements along the major corridors**
- **Encourage the development of neighborhood serving retail along the corridors**
- **Focus higher density housing along the corridors**

Future growth will also be directed to high-density, mixed-use corridors outside the expanded Loop. The corridors will be served by CTA rail and bus transit systems and accommodate housing, retail, educational and cultural institutions, hospitality and some office activity. With their broad array of uses and activities in close proximity to one another, mixed-use corridors are quintessentially urban. Museums are down the street from shopping districts, and both are within walking distance of housing and offices. All support and enhance one another, adding a richness to the urban experience no single use could provide. This diversity is one of the Central Area's greatest assets, making it more vital and sustainable over time.

High density mixed-use corridors offer many advantages:

- **A SENSE OF PLACE FOR THE COMMUNITY.**
  High density corridors are a natural focus for the surrounding community, serving as gathering places and strengthening neighborhood identity.
- **PROXIMITY TO TRANSIT.**
  Mixed-use corridors generally focus on major streets and transit, a reflection of Chicago's street car and transit corridor history.
- **CONVENIENT ACCESS TO COMMERCIAL SERVICES.**
  The high density mixed-use corridors provide the opportunity for important retail nodes to adequately serve the needs of the community.
- **A CLEAR ORGANIZATION OF MIXED-USE AND RESIDENTIAL USES.**
  The corridors provide mixed-use development opportunities while the adjacent areas may be developed as single-use residential neighborhoods. This will permit residents to live on a quiet street within a short walk of convenient shopping and services.
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING.**
  Apartments and condominium buildings concentrate residents close to transit and to work.
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECONDARY OFFICE GROWTH ALONG TRANSIT CORRIDORS.**
  Smaller scale office development can be directed to portions of the corridors to allow secondary offices to have easy access to services and transit and to allow people to work close to home.

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Neighborhoods and Special Places

Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places

Key Recommendations:

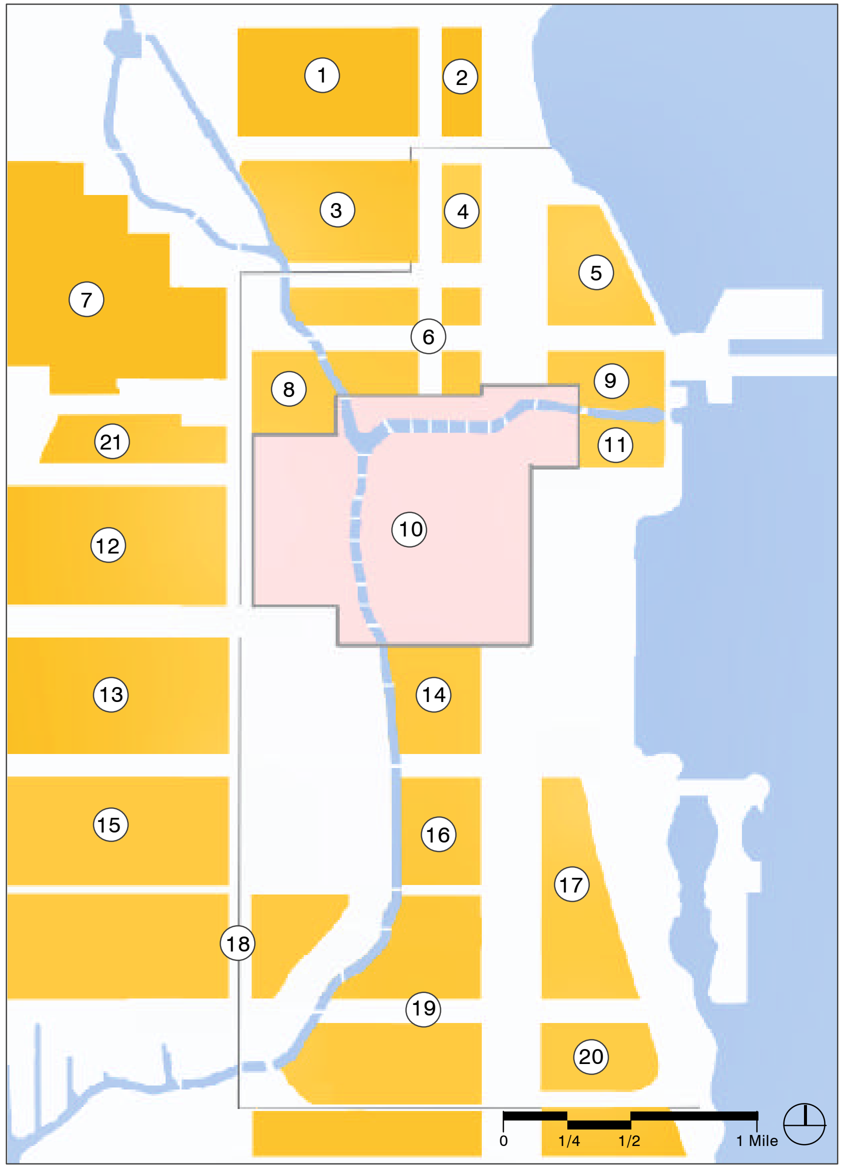
- **Ensure all neighborhoods will have convenient access to transit**
- **Ensure all neighborhoods are within walking distance to a commercial corridor**
- **Provide convenient access to open space, parks and recreation for each neighborhood**
- **Respect and enhance the existing character of each neighborhood**

The Expanded Loop and Mixed-use Corridors will be complemented by a diverse collection of residential neighborhoods and special Chicago places.

The variety of neighborhoods include existing stable neighborhoods such as Pilsen and Chinatown, emerging neighborhoods in the Near South, and opportunities for new neighborhoods along the south branch of the Chicago River and in the loft districts west of the Loop. The Central Area's neighborhoods will vary in density, use and physical form. Its special places will require the careful balancing of preservation with new development.

Central Area and Adjacent Neighborhoods

1. Old Town
2. Gold Coast
3. Cabrini Green
4. Near North
5. Streeterville and Northwestern
6. River North
7. Near Northwest
8. Fulton River District
9. Cityfront Center
10. The Expanded Loop
11. Lakeshore East
12. Near West Side and Greektown
13. UIC and Little Italy
14. Printers Row and Dearborn Park I
15. University Village
16. Near South and Dearborn Park II
17. Central Station and Prairie Avenue
18. Pilsen
19. Near South and Chinatown
20. McCormick Place
21. Kinzie Station



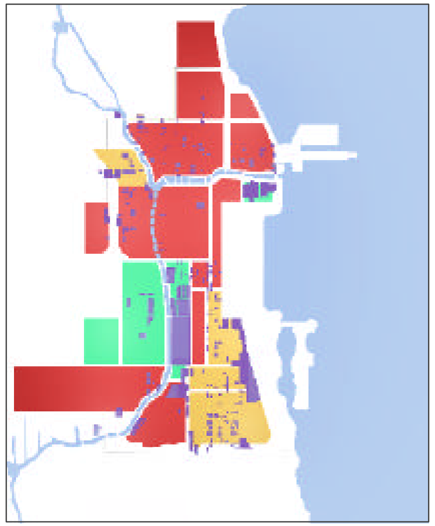


Figure 4.1.12
Stable, emerging and new neighborhoods in the Central Area with vacant land and underutilized sites.

🟥 Stable Neighborhoods
🟨 Emerging Neighborhoods
🟩 New Neighborhoods
🟪 Vacant and Underutilized Sites

Figure 4.1.13
Neighborhoods and Special Places

🟨 Neighborhoods
☐ The Expanded Loop

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City of Chicago Landmark Districts
in the Central Area

1. Washington Square District
2. East Lake Shore Drive District
3. Old Chicago Water Tower District
4. Printers Row District
5. Michigan Avenue Streetwall
6. Prairie Avenue District
7. Motor Row District

Character Districts in the Central Area

8. Gold Coast
9. Gallery District
10. Wells-Kinzie District
11. Courthouse District
12. Fulton River District
13. Jackson Loft District
14. Prairie Avenue District
15. Chinatown District

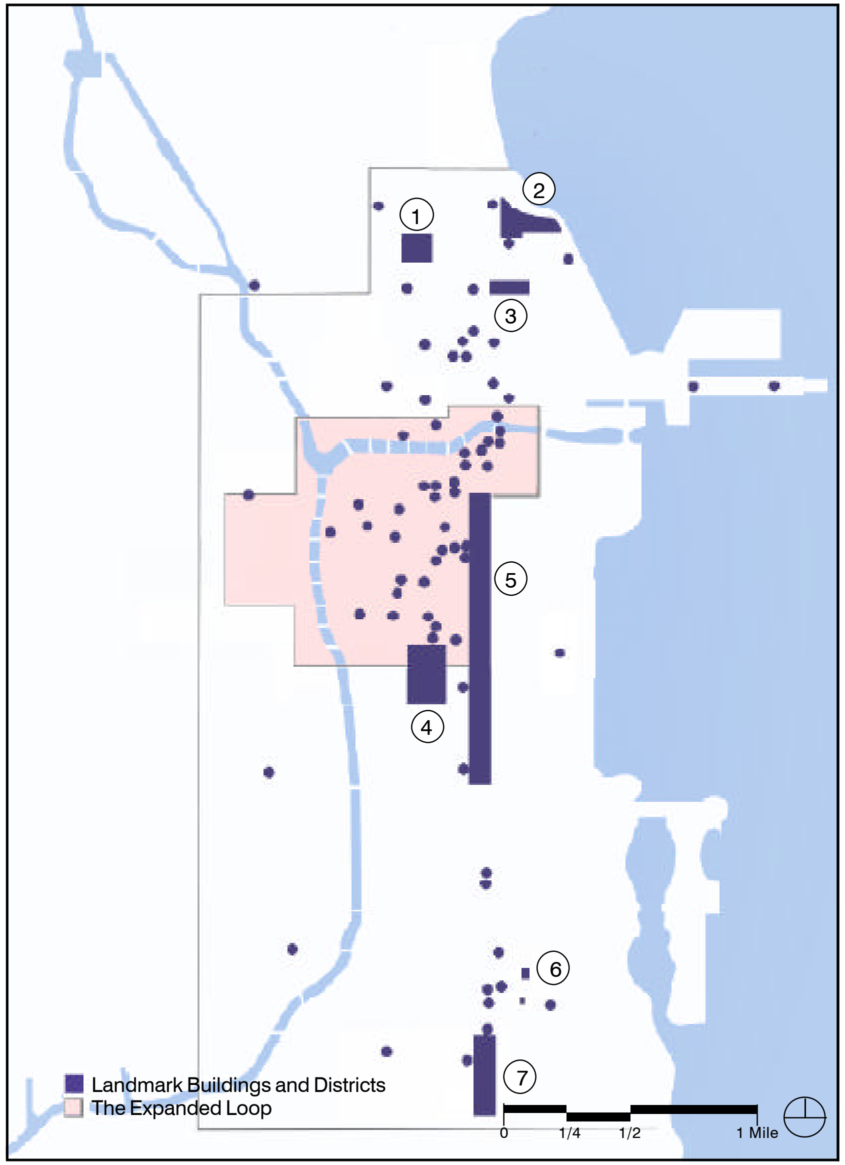
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Landmark Buildings and Districts
The Expanded Loop
0
1/4
1/2
1 Mile

Figure 4.1.14
Landmark Buildings and Districts within the Central Area

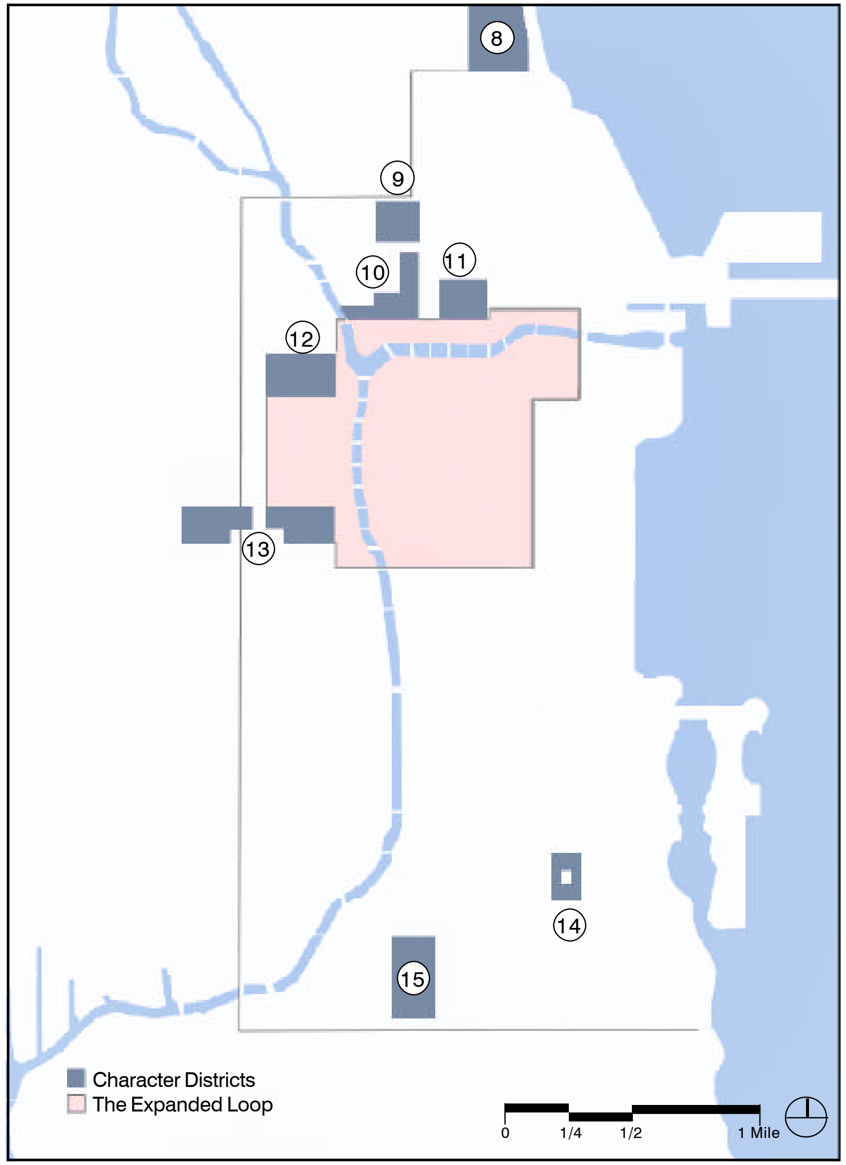
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
Character Districts
The Expanded Loop
0
1/4
1/2
1 Mile

Figure 4.1.15
Character Districts within the Central Area

Landmarks and Character Districts

Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage

Key Recommendations:

- Protect and preserve the most significant historic buildings and districts through landmark designation and economic incentives.
    - Protect the currently designated landmark buildings and districts in the Central Area.
    - Continue to designate the Central Area's most important landmark buildings and districts.
    - Protect significant buildings and districts that have been identified on the City's historic resources survey, are under study as potential landmarks, or are on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
    - Expand incentives to motivate owners to preserve and maintain historic buildings.
    - Educate building owners about the benefits of preservation.
- Strengthen and conserve character districts.
    - Establish and enforce appropriate densities, height limits, setback requirements and other zoning elements to preserve character.
    - Establish design guidelines for specific districts.
    - Lower the threshold for Planned Development review of projects in character districts.
    - Create incentives for building owners who sensitively rehabilitate buildings that contribute to character districts.

CHICAGO'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Chicago's landmarks give form and texture to the Central Area and connect people to the achievements of past generations. The rich materials, street-level interest, human scale, exceptional ornament and superb craftsmanship of landmark buildings and districts contribute visual excitement to the urban environment and give Chicago's Central Area its special sense of place.

Chicago is the city that gave birth to the modern skyscraper, and its tradition of architectural innovation includes some of the world's tallest buildings. The bold skeletal frames of the Chicago School of Architecture, Louis Sullivan's exquisite ornament, the stately neoclassical designs that mark public and financial institutions, the geometry of art deco buildings, the expansive forms of modernism, the elegance of cultural spaces from Tiffany domes to exuberant movie palaces, and the smaller scale details of residential neighborhoods from Beaux Arts apartment buildings to Richardsonian Romanesque homes, make Chicago's Central Area a living museum of architecture that is known worldwide. Its historic buildings add immeasurably to the Central Area's quality of life, create great urban symbols, provide street level excitement and impressive interior public spaces, and attract visitors from around the world.

Preservation makes economic sense. It creates the quality of life that attracts businesses and visitors to the Central Area, and enhances property values. The economic benefits of heritage tourism are growing rapidly – travel industry surveys report that 40% of Americans make visiting an historic place part of their vacations, and that these travelers tend to spend 40% more than the typical visitor. A national study demonstrates that $1 million spent on rehabilitation will create more jobs and keep more money in the local economy than the same million dollars spent on new construction. Recent experience in Chicago shows that rehabilitating existing school buildings is $25 per square foot less expensive than constructing new schools.

Chicago must continue to be proactive in preserving Central Area Landmarks, and educate property owners and developers on the economic and environmental benefits of recycling historic buildings for new uses. Preservation will continue to be a major priority in Central Area Development.

CHARACTER DISTRICTS

There are numerous districts in the Central Area where design, scale, use and materials combine to create a distinctive identity. Character districts in the Central Area include the Gallery and Mart Districts in River North, the Courthouse District in the Near North, the Jackson Loft District in the West Loop and Chinatown in the Near South.

The distinctive features that give these districts their special character will be maintained as new development occurs. Design guidelines, zoning regulations, height limits, and lower thresholds for reviewing new projects as Planned Developments are tools for preserving the character that these districts contribute to the Central Area.

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Industrial Districts & Corridors

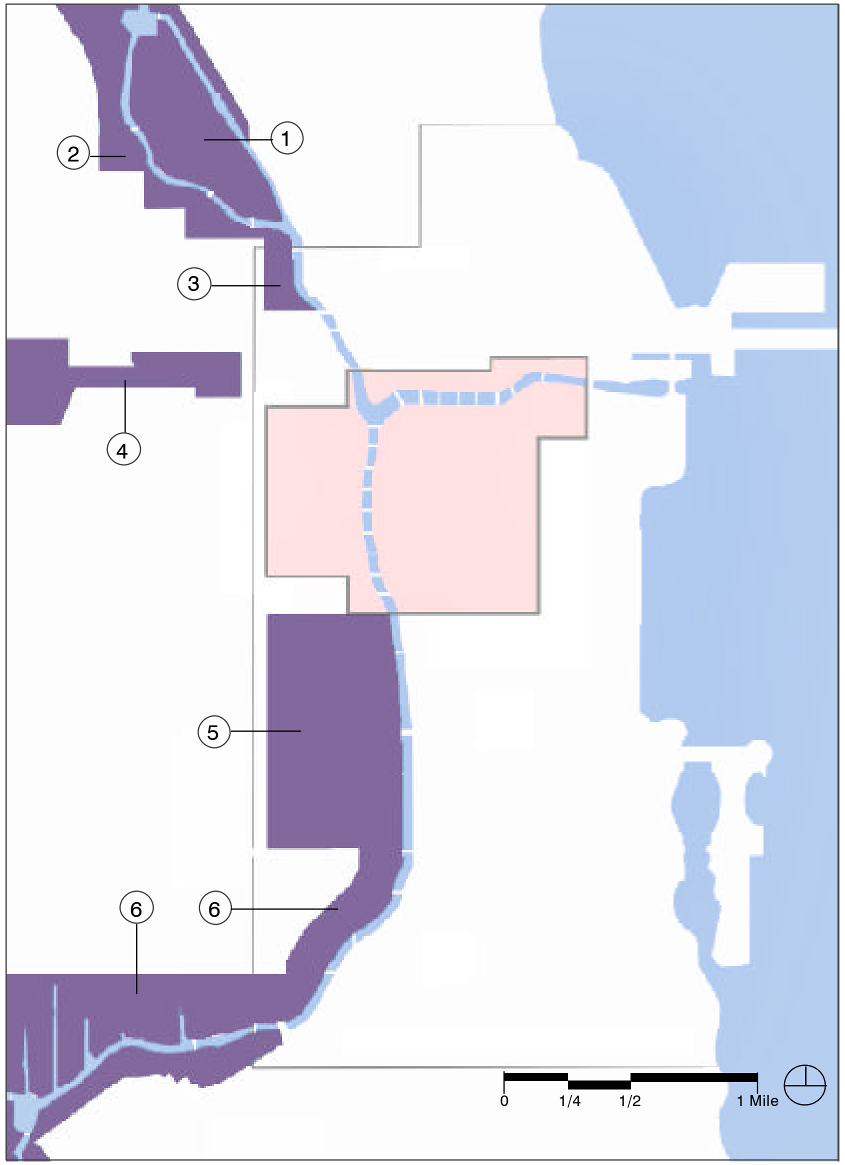


Figure 4.1.16
The DesPlaines / Canal district (#5 on map) is buffered by the Dan Ryan Expressway on the west and railroad tracks on the east, and is an ideal location for warehousing, distribution and industrial use.

Central Area Industrial Districts and Corridors

1. Goose Island Planned Manufacturing District
2. The Elston Industrial Corridor Planned Manufacturing District
3. Chicago Halsted Planned Manufacturing District
4. The Kinzie Industrial Corridor
5. Southwest Loop Area
   The Des Plaines/Canal district south of Harrison Street
6. Pilsen Industrial Corridor

■ Industrial and Downtown Service Districts
□ The Expanded Loop

Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts

Key Recommendations:

- **Maintain sufficient industrial land to service the downtown business core**
- **Maintain industrial and distribution jobs in the Central Area**
- **Improve transit access for employees**
- **Maintain good truck access for businesses and improve truck access from expressways to adjacent industrial sites**
- **Improve landscaping throughout these districts**
- **Emphasize innovative architecture for the next generation of industrial uses**
- **Distinguish these districts as complementary to the adjacent residential and business districts**

Warehousing, distribution, new industries and other industrial uses remain essential to the Central Area. An adequate supply of industrial land will be retained to maintain jobs and diversity of use. Planned Manufacturing Districts were created to define boundaries for industrial, distribution, warehousing and other uses. These and other special land use regulations will retain land for industrial uses and keep these necessary services close to the downtown office core.

Cultural Attractions & Tourist Destinations

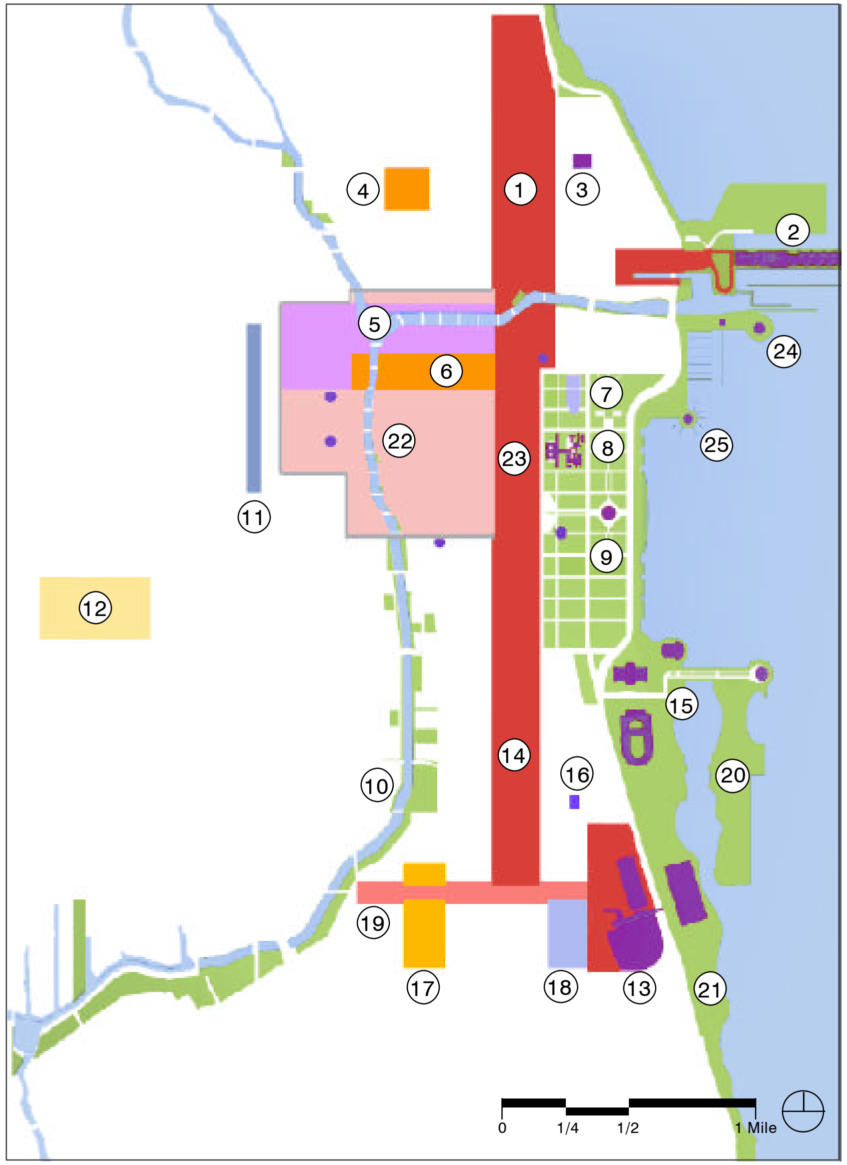
Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

Key Recommendations:

- **Improve transit connections between the Museum Campus, McCormick Place, Downtown, the airports, North Michigan Avenue, Navy Pier and major train stations**
- **Accommodate McCormick Place expansion to Indiana Street**
- **Integrate Motor Row with McCormick Place expansion through the development of dining, entertainment, hotels and conference facilities**
- **Develop Cermak Road as a mixed-use corridor connecting Pilsen, Chinatown, McCormick Place and the Lakefront**
- **Continue efforts to strengthen the Theater District**
- **Promote existing neighborhood cultural attractions and develop new ones**
- **Expand and complete Monroe Harbor**
- **Create Wacker Pier with a new museum**
- **Create a new public arts high school**

Central Area Visitor Destinations

1. Magnificent Mile
2. Navy Pier
3. Museum of Contemporary Art
4. River North Gallery District
5. Chicago River Main Branch
6. Randolph Street Theater Row
7. Millenium Park with Band Shell
8. The Art Institute
9. Grant Park
10. Chicago River Open Space / Ping Tom Park
11. Greek Town
12. Little Italy
13. McCormick Place
14. Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor
15. Museum Campus
16. Prairie Avenue Museums and Gardens
17. Chinatown
18. Motor Row
19. Cermak Road
20. Northerly Island Park
21. Burnham Park
22. Civic Opera
23. Symphony Center
24. Proposed Wacker Pier and New Museum
25. An Expanded Monroe Harbor



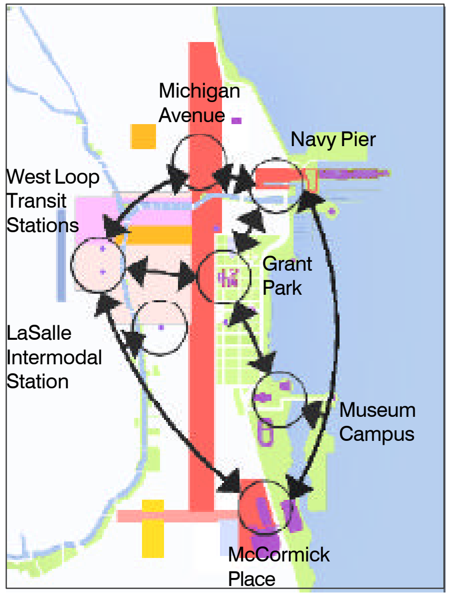


Figure 4.1.17
Transit improvements should conveniently tie the tourist destinations together

Figure 4.1.18
A strengthened framework of tourist destinations and visitor districts

🟧 Visitor Districts
🟪 Tourist Destinations
🟩 Regional open space
● Amtrak and Metra Stations

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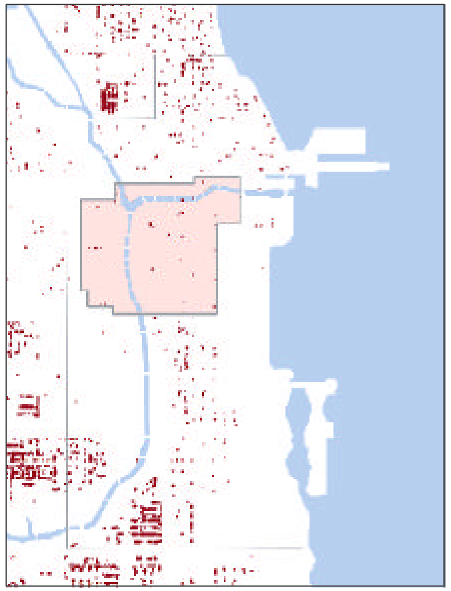

Figure 4.1.19
The distribution of Chicago Public School students in the Central Area

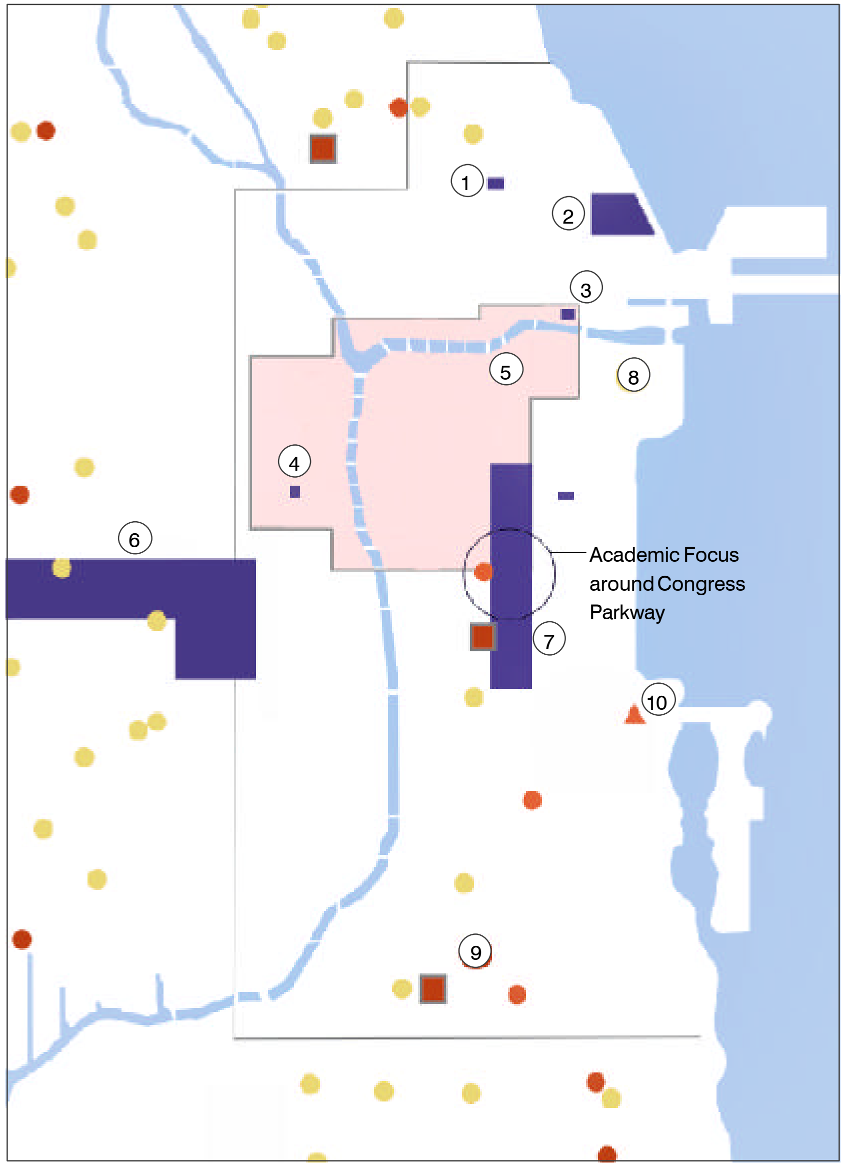

Figure 4.1.20
The Future of Education in the Central Area

■ Higher Education Districts
□ The Expanded Loop
● High Schools - existing
◉ High Schools - new
● Elementary Schools - existing
◉ Elementary Schools - new
▲ Museum Campus
■ Library

Education and Learning

The Central Area will provide opportunities for lifelong learning

Key Recommendations:

- **Cluster higher-educational uses in the Near North and South Loop, with special emphasis around Congress Parkway and at U.I.C.**
- **Allow for future institutional growth in each of these three clusters**
- **Encourage shared uses between institutions including student housing**
- **Ensure institutional compatibility with neighborhoods**
- **Support primary and secondary education facilities in the Central Area**
- **View Central Area museums as learning environments that can play an active role in education**
- **Expand use of libraries as educational resources**

Central Area educational institutions include primary and secondary schools that service residents, higher education institutions, and alternative learning environments including museums, libraries and the Chicago Cultural Center.

The City should continue its efforts to strengthen the public school system, and primary and secondary schools should function as important neighborhood community centers. Higher education facilities in the Central Area contribute vitality by bringing students downtown, preserving buildings, providing innovative public programs and making learning accessible to downtown workers and residents. The city and the educational institutions should continue their collaboration to ensure the future growth of this valuable community asset.

The Central Area's museums and cultural institutions in collaboration with educational institutions, create learning environments for all ages.

Legend

Central Area Higher Education

1. Loyola University
2. Northwestern University
   Northwestern Memorial Hospital
3. University of Chicago
4. Illinois Institute of Technology
5. Harold Washington College
6. University of Illinois at Chicago
   and Medical Center
7. East Loop universities and colleges
   DePaul University
   Roosevelt University
   School of the Art Institute of Chicago

7. East Loop universities and colleges
   National Louis University
   Robert Morris College
   Columbia College
   John Marshall Law School
   East-West University
   Aurora University

Central Area New Schools

8. Lake Shore East Elementary School
9. Teacher's Academy - Cermak
   Elementary and Teacher's Academy

Additional Learning Environments

10. Museum Campus

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Chapter 4 : THEME 2

Transportation

Strengthen connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around

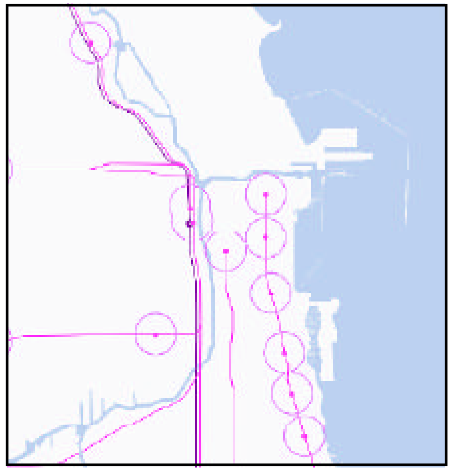

Figure 4.2.1
Promote region-wide transit investments. Metra commuter rail provides service to the east, south and west of the Loop.

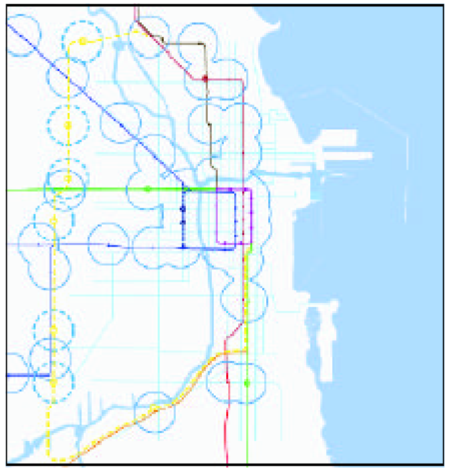

Figure 4.2.2
Much of the Central Area is within 5 minutes walk of a CTA station.

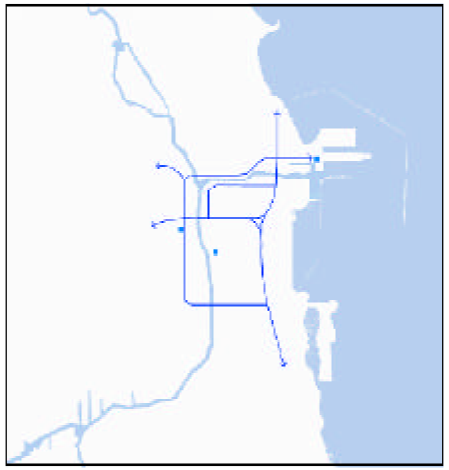

Figure 4.2.3
Preserving rights-of-way is critical to providing new transit services.

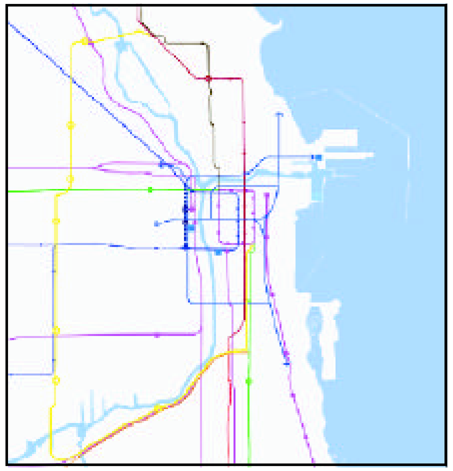

Figure 4.2.4
Convenient connections between all modes will be required.

Key for Figure 3.2.5
Development Framework
Highest Density Loop and Corridors
High Density Corridors
Neighborhoods
Transit Infrastructure
Existing Blue Line
Existing Subway and "L"
Regional Rail
Clinton Street Subway
Clinton Busway
Monroe Busway
Carroll Busway
Lakefront Busway

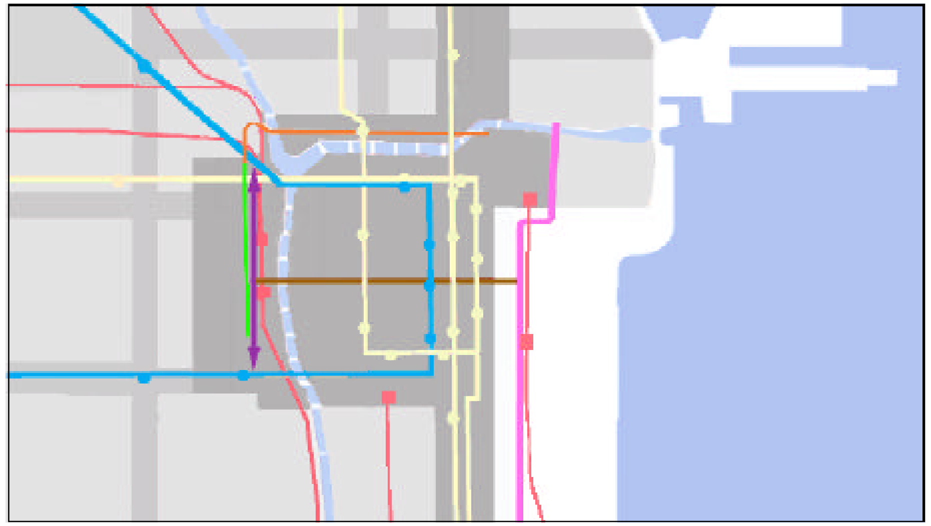

Figure 4.2.5
Central Area transit improvements will provide improved service to the Expanded Loop.

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Theme 2:
Transportation and Access

Strengthen connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around

Guiding Principles

- **CENTRAL AREA TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS**
  Make transit the first choice for people coming to the Central Area
- **WALKABLE CITY**
  Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment
- **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**
  Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock
- **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**
  Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis
- **METROPOLITAN AREA EXPANSION PROJECTS**
  Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.
- **MIDWEST AND NATIONAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS**
  Improve national and international connections.

Central Area Transit Improvements

Key Recommendations

- Exclusive transitways will reduce congestion and offer rapid circulation
- A new West Loop Transportation Center will create an additional transportation hub
- Transit modernizations and enhancements will improve accessibility and comfort.

Make Transit the first choice for people coming in to the Central Area

Transit systems in the Central Area and throughout the metropolitan area must be upgraded to meet the challenge of bringing the projected 188,000 to 272,000 new downtown workers to the expanded Loop. Mass transit is the only practical means of efficiently moving large numbers of future workers to and around the Central Area.

Central Area transit improvements will be built in those areas of the expanded Loop slated for the highest density. The improvements will be built in phases as development progresses, but all will eventually be required as the expanded Loop reaches the projected build-out. All necessary rights-of-way must be preserved to permit implementation at the appropriate time.

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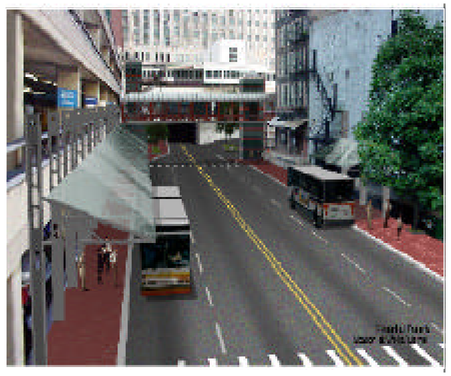


Figure 4.2.6
The future Carroll Avenue Transitway, looking from LaSalle Street towards the Merchandise Mart, showing the connection to the Brown and Purple Line CTA trains.

Figure 4.2.7
A new generation of transit vehicles will offer energy efficient and comfortable transit on dedicated transitways that reduce congestion and travel times.

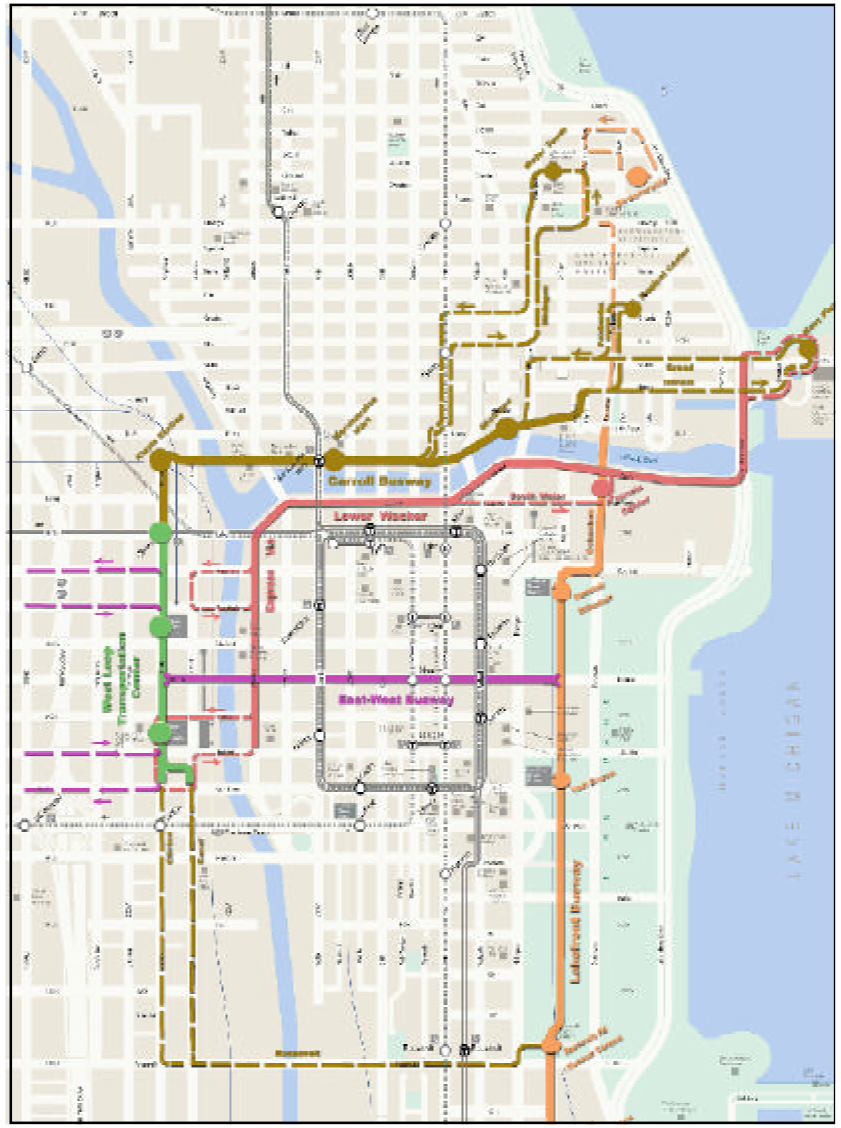


Figure 4.2.8 The future transitway system

Transitways

Exclusive transitways will ensure efficient transit circulation regardless of street congestion

Buses are relatively inexpensive and flexible and will remain an important element of the downtown transportation system. To ensure the continued viability of the bus system, many Loop-bound routes could operate in dedicated transitways, either at or below grade, in the Central Area. The proposed exclusive transitways will provide essential service to CTA and Metra stations. On heavily traveled routes it may be desirable to use high-capacity "bus rapid transit" (BRT) vehicles. BRT vehicles can carry as many as 120 passengers - more than double a standard bus. BRT vehicles use multiple wide doors and low floors to permit fast boarding of passengers who have previously paid their fares at a transitway station. Ultimately, the transitways may be served by light rail. The use of exclusive transitways offer numerous advantages:

- **NO SLOWDOWNS** - The exclusive right-of-way enables buses to maintain schedules regardless of street traffic conditions. Since transitways have multiple lanes and do not require fixed guideways, service can easily be routed around stalled vehicles.
- **LOW COST** - Since no tracks or power distribution equipment are required, transitways can be built for a fraction of the cost of rail.
- **FLEXIBLE ROUTING** - Although the transitway itself is fixed, buses exiting at portals en route complete their journeys via ordinary streets. This permits great flexibility in routing and minimizes the need for transfers.
- **INCREMENTAL CONSTRUCTION** - Transitways can be built in phases and use conventional streets to provide continuous service.
- **MINIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT** - Buses do not require overhead wires or tracks and clean-fuel alternatives are available.
- **NO SPECIAL VEHICLES REQUIRED** - Ordinary buses can be operated in transitways if desired. "Clean fuel" vehicles with minimal emissions will reduce the need for expensive or unsightly transitway ventilation.
- **PRE-BOARDING FARE COLLECTION AND WEATHER-PROTECTED PLATFORMS** - Transitway stations can be similar to rail rapid transit stations, with pre-boarding fare payment. Platforms can be heated, lighted, and weather-protected and provided with trip planning and tourist information kiosks displaying bus arrival times.
- **CENTRALIZED DISPATCHING AND CONTROL.** - Advanced real-time location capabilities, service management software and voice/data communications between bus operators and dispatchers would enable precision performance of scheduled service.
- **CONVERSION TO RAIL** - If downtown growth requires added capacity in the future, transitways can be converted to rail operation.

The Central Area's first busway is the Lakefront Busway, which links McCormick Place with Illinois Center and Streeterville hotels. Buildings on its success, four new transitways are proposed:

LOWER WACKER DRIVE EXPRESS BUSES

Express bus service will be reintroduced to Lower Wacker Drive following the completion of the Wacker Drive reconstruction. Bus priority measures will be provided at key intersections leading to Wacker Drive from both Union Station and Ogilive Center and on-ramps accessing Lower Wacker to provide more reliable service.

CARROLL AVENUE TRANSITWAY

The Carroll Avenue transitway will use a grade-separated railroad right-of-way along the line of Carroll Avenue north of the Main Branch between the west bank of the Chicago River to Rush Street. It will eventually link to the Clinton transitway and will substantially improve travel times between the West Loop and River North, North Michigan Avenue, Streeterville, and Navy Pier. It will provide two dedicated bus lanes, one in each direction. The Carroll Avenue transitway is a prime candidate for "bus rapid transit" (BRT) vehicles. Daily scheduled service will shuttle riders between the West Loop commuter stations via the Clinton transitway to offices and shopping north of the river, and to Navy Pier for special events. A transfer will be provided from the Brown/Purple Line station at the Merchandise Mart to the transitway station below.

EAST-WEST TRANSITWAY

CTA buses currently use eastbound lanes on Washington and Adams and westbound lanes on Madison and Jackson. These lanes are affected by vehicles making right turns at cross streets and by vehicles exiting driveways, extending travel times for bus riders and discouraging transit use. As a first step, these on-street bus lanes will be upgraded through improved signal timing, streetscape enhancements and other amenities. An exclusive transitway may be created at the street level, in the short term, on Adams and Monroe Streets.

If warranted by future traffic growth, a below-grade transitway could be built on Monroe Street to improve east-west bus times through the Loop. This below-grade transitway would make use of a right-of-way reserved by the City for a potential east-west subway in the 1970's. It would extend from Michigan Avenue to Clinton Street, crossing the Chicago River via tunnel. Portals would permit buses to enter and exit at Michigan Avenue and at Clinton. A connection could also be provided to the existing South Lakefront transitway to McCormick Place.

Buses operating in the East-West transitway could be primarily existing line-haul routes that currently use Loop streets. Convenient connections could be provided to the State and Dearborn subways below. Escalators and elevators would transport riders between platform and street level, with bus waiting times displayed on electronic signs. The platforms could be extended to create a continuous pedway between Michigan Avenue and Union Station, with connections to the existing pedway. As a first step, this right-of-way may also be developed as a pedway.

CLINTON CORRIDOR

The Clinton transitway will be provided as part of a multi-level bus/rail subway under Clinton Street, described in the following section.

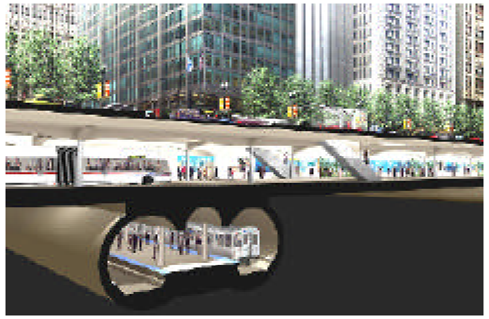


Figure 4.2.9
The future East-West transitway under Monroe Street.

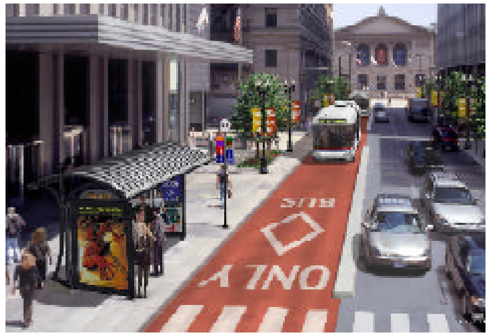
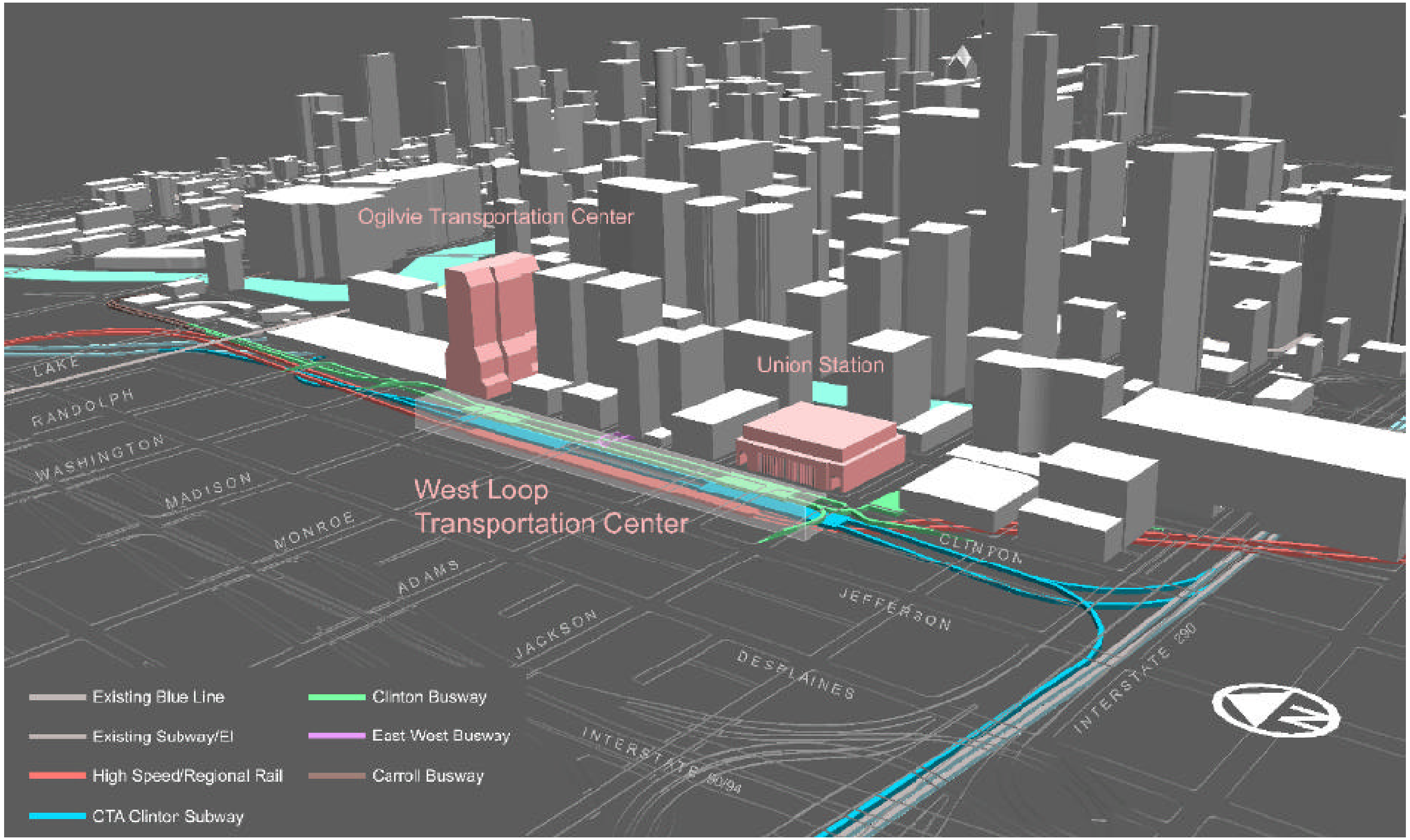


Figure 4.2.10
The future East-West transitway on Adams Street.

Figure 4.2.11
The proposed West Loop Transportation Center along Clinton Street between the Ogilvie Transportation Center and Union Station has the potential to connect all parts of downtown, provide the Expanded Loop with excellent transit access, and provide platforms to serve high-speed rail.


Ogilvie Transportation Center
Union Station
West Loop Transportation Center
LAKE
RANDOLPH
WASHINGTON
MADISON
MONROE
ADAMS
JACKSON
CLINTON
JEFFERSON
DESPLAINES
INTERSTATE 90/94
INTERSTATE 290
Existing Blue Line
Existing Subway/El
High Speed/Regional Rail
CTA Clinton Subway
Clinton Busway
East West Busway
Carroll Busway

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West Loop Transportation Center

A new transit hub under Clinton Street will provide the West Loop office district with the same convenient, high-volume transit service that supported the growth of the Central Loop.

A new transportation center is proposed under Clinton Street, called the West Loop Transportation Center. The development of the Clinton Street transitway, CTA rail services, commuter and high-speed rail lines can be phased. The construction of a shell for a multi-level tunnel in the initial phase will result in substantial long-term construction cost savings and simplify the eventual completion of the West Loop Transportation Center.

The Transportation Center will have four levels:

1. **Mezzanine**
2. **Transitway**
3. **CTA Rail**
4. **Commuter and Intercity Rail**

TRANSITWAY
A dedicated transitway connected to the Monroe Street transitway with portals at Randolph, Washington, Jackson, and Van Buren streets. Short- and line-haul routes would use this route. Line-haul routes crossing the Loop via the Monroe Street transitway would enter and exit the transitway system via portals on Clinton Street. Short-haul routes serving River North and Streeterville would exit via the north portals, cross the river south of Kinzie Street, and enter the Carroll Avenue transitway en route to their final destinations.

CTA RAIL
Two options follow for connecting the West Loop to the other parts of the Central Area and the CTA rail network.

OPTION A - BLUE LINE LOOP
The Blue Line Loop would create a second transit loop in the Central Area. The two existing CTA Blue Lines, the Congress/Douglas Park branches and the O'Hare branch would be connected via a branch below Clinton Street. Two stations would be provided, one at Union Station and the other at the Ogilvie Transportation Center. Clinton Street is the ideal alignment for this purpose because it is adjacent to the rail stations and also has no major underground utilities that would complicate construction.

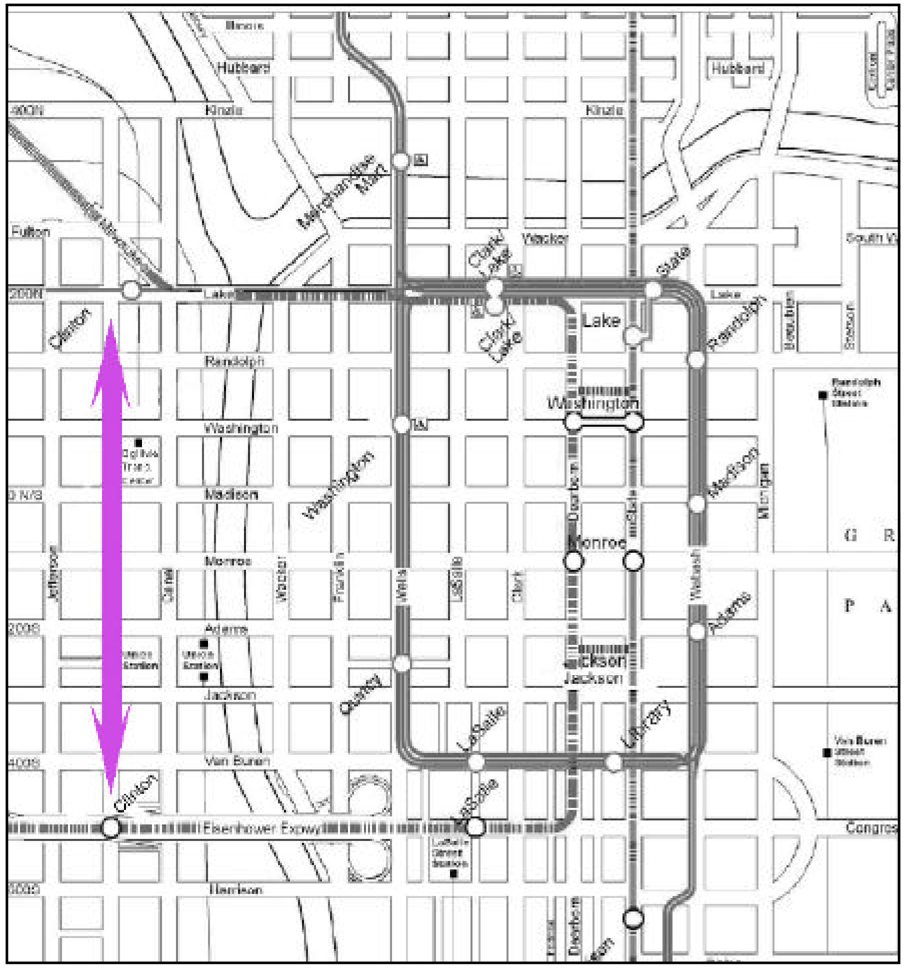
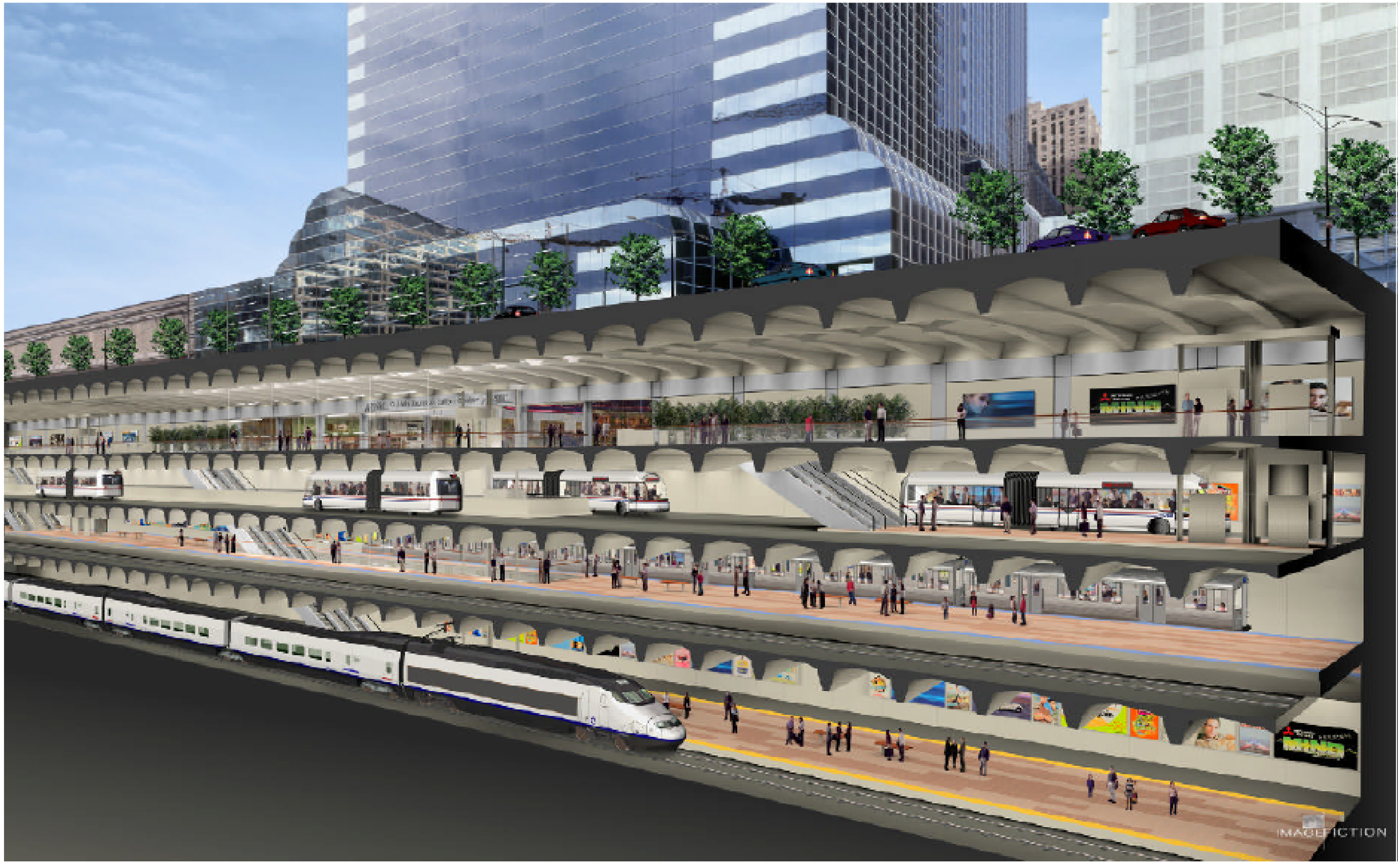

Illinois
Hubbard
Kinzie
400N
Fulton
200N
Clinton
Lake
Randolph
Washington
Madison
Monroe
Adams
Jackson
Van Buren
Eisenhower Expwy
Harrison
Merchandise Mart
Wacker
Clark/Lake
State
Lake
Washington
Monroe
Jackson
Library
LaSalle
Quincy
Jefferson
Canal
Franklin
Wells
Clark
Dearborn
Wabash
Michigan
Congress
Randolph Street Station
Van Buren Street Station
LaSalle Street Station
Union Station
Ogilvie Trans. Center
G R
P A

Figure 4.2.12
CTA improvements centered on the Clinton Street transitway would include either a Blue Line loop, connecting the Congress/Douglas and O'Hare branches; or a connection to the Red Line.

Figure 4.2.13
The proposed West Loop Transportation Center, a multi-modal facility to provide access throughout the Central Area and improve high-speed inter-city connections.



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The Blue Line Loop would provide the West Loop with fast, convenient rail service comparable to that available in the Central Loop. Passengers on any of the Blue Line branches would have direct access to Clinton Street stops. Passengers entering the Central Area on other CTA rail lines would be able to change to Blue Line trains at existing Loop transfer points. The two proposed stations are within easy walking distance of the entire portion of the West Loop identified for higher-density development. The Blue Line Loop would also provide better distribution of commuter rail riders to the east side of downtown and other points on the Blue Line, including the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Medical Center, and O'Hare Airport.

OPTION B - CTA RED LINE CONNECTOR

The middle level could also be used by a new Red Line route extending for several miles in a north-south subway. This would provide direct connections to the West Loop from the north and south. It would provide additional capacity in the State Street subway for other services. This concept requires further feasibility studies.

COMMUTER AND INTER-CITY RAIL

The lowest level of the West Loop Transportation Center will provide two through platforms for commuter and intercity trains entering from either the north or south. The development of through platform connections will realize a plan to connect north and south railroad lines first identified in Burnham's Plan of Chicago in 1909. The platforms will provide overflow capacity for Union Station and the Ogilvie Transportation Center, both of which are approaching their train-handling capabilities. The platforms could also serve as the downtown terminal for the proposed high-speed regional rail system which uses Chicago as the hub and links major midwestern destinations using trains operating at 100+ MPH.

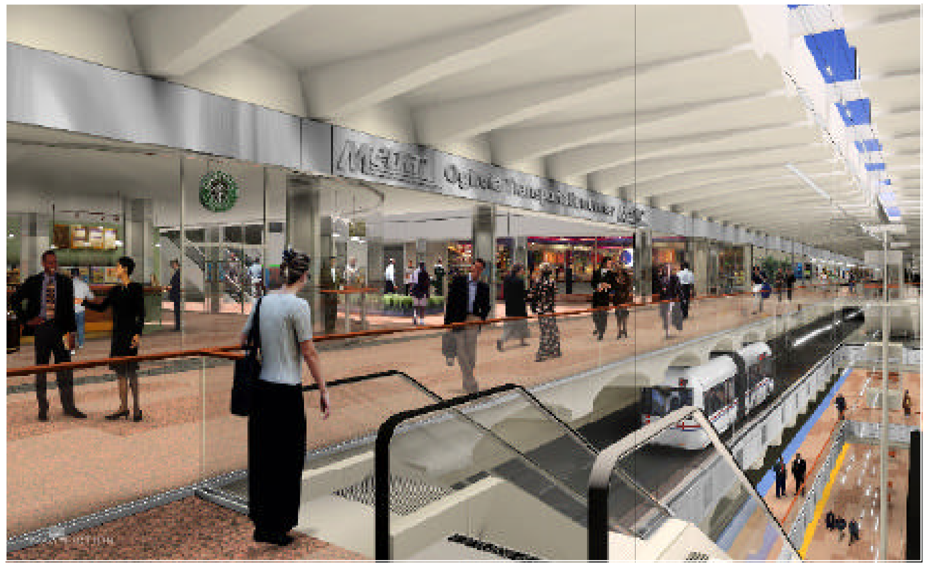


Figure 4.2.14
The West Loop Transportation Center - mezzanine entrance level will feature convenience retail serving commuters.

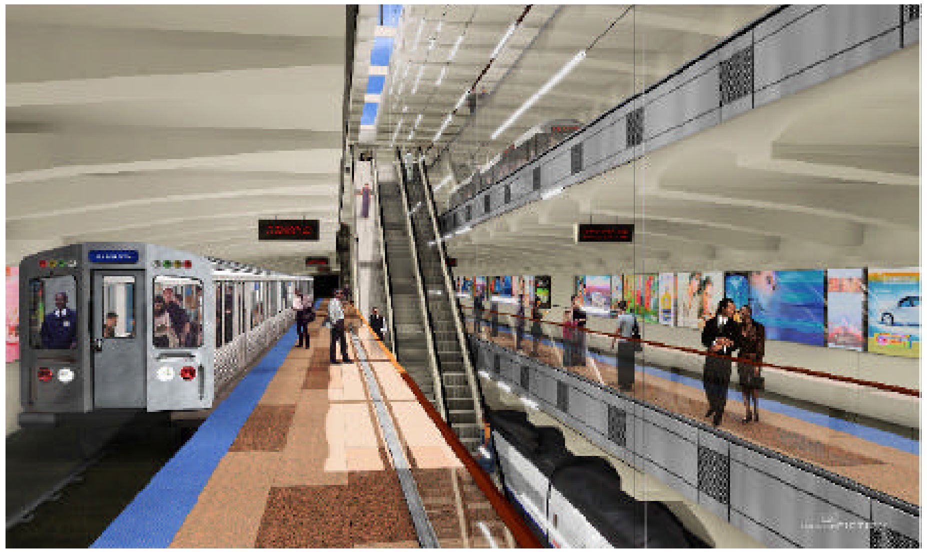
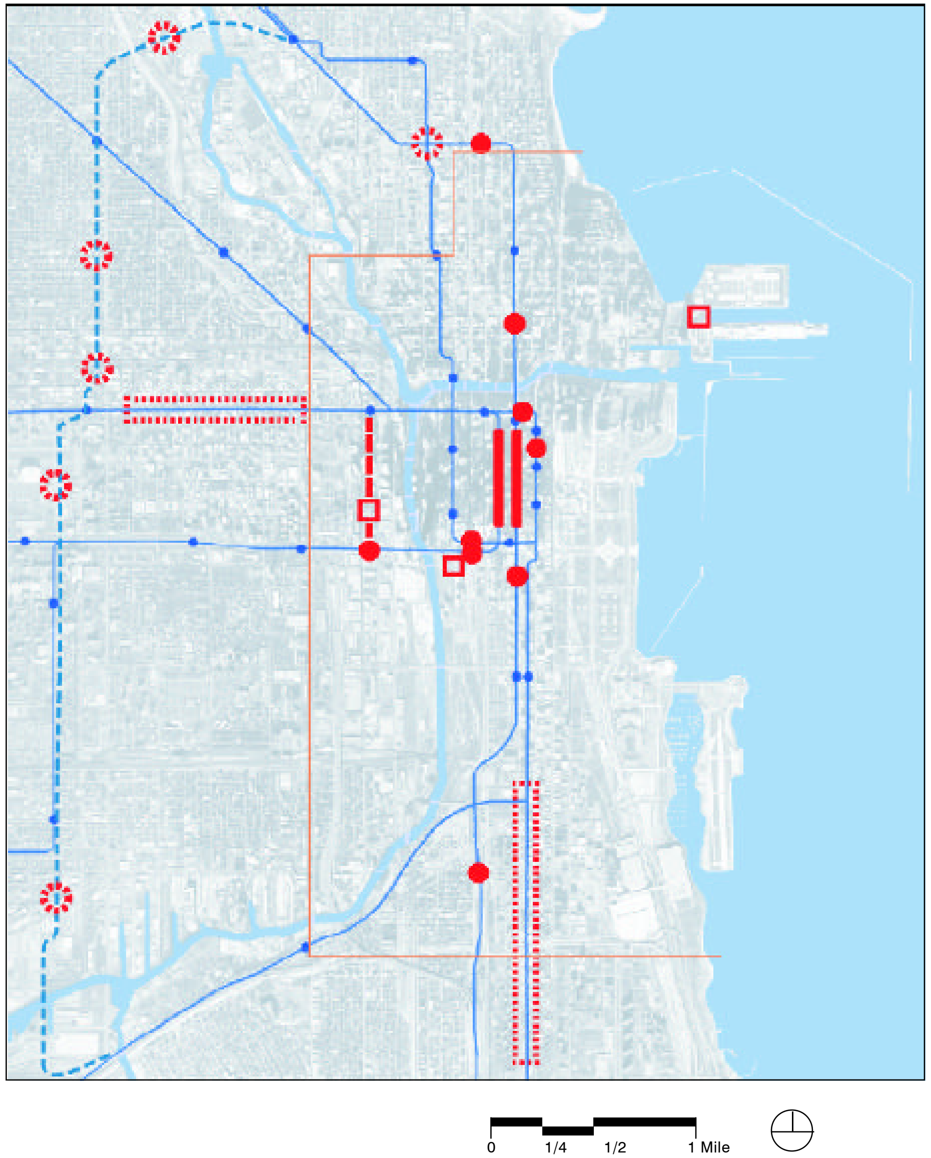


Figure 4.2.15
The West Loop Transportation Center - CTA Rail level, where passengers would access the new Blue Line loop or the new Red Line connection.

Figure 4.2.16
CTA modernizations and enhancements



- ● CTA Rapid Transit Station
- ⬚ New CTA Stations - Potential Locations
- ▬ CTA Station Platform Improvement
- ● CTA Station Improvement
- □ Enhanced Intermodal Bus Stops
- - - New circumferential CTA line
- ▬ ▪ West Loop Transportation Center

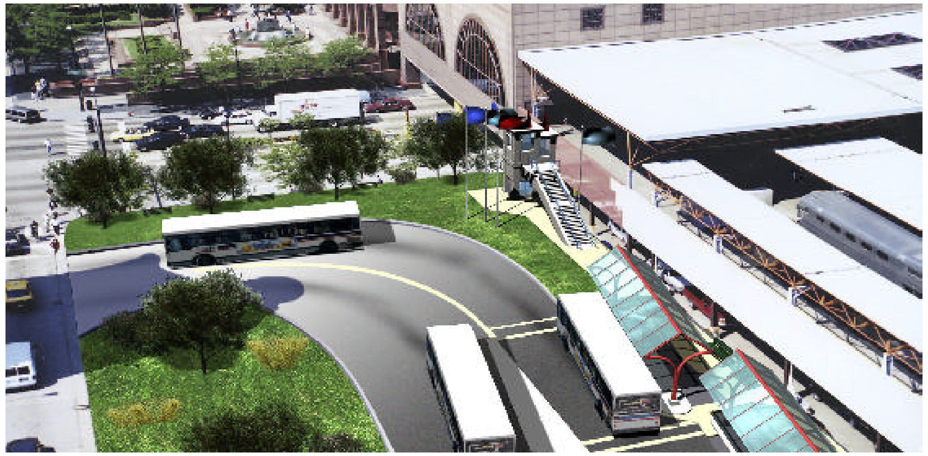


Figure 4.2.17
Enhanced intermodal bus connections at La Salle Street Station will mean that commuters no longer need to walk several blocks to board buses.

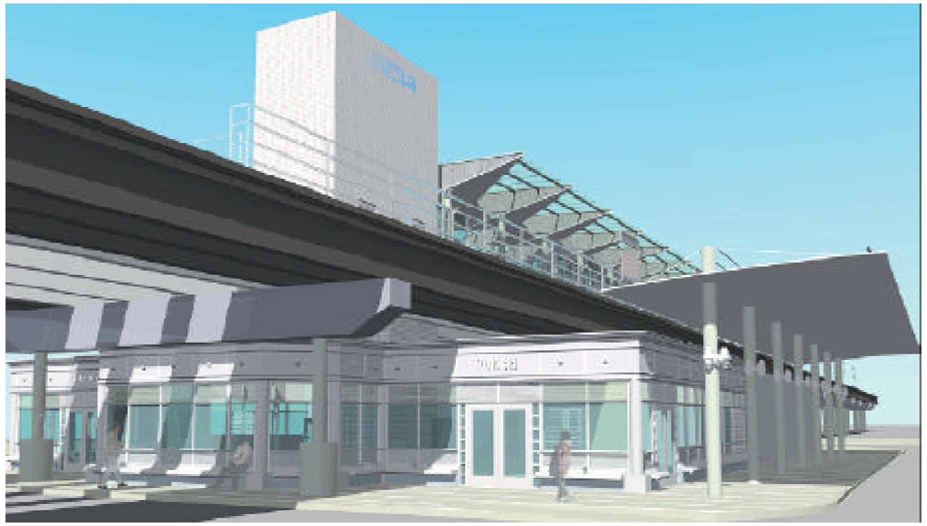


Figure 4.2.18
Rapid Transit Stations will be renovated to improve accessibility, create spacious mezzanines and platforms, and improve customer information.

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Transit Modernizations and Enhancements

Existing downtown transit facilities in the Expanded Loop will be renovated and new facilities will be built to improve accessibility and comfort.

Transit modernizations and enhancements include:

- **NEW CIRCLE LINE**
  The Circle Line will link all existing CTA and Metra lines, providing better transit linkages and improved access to the periphery of the city center. Much of the line will incorporate existing tracks and stations.
- **CTA STATION IMPROVEMENTS**
  Stations and platforms will be renovated to improve accessibility, provide more spacious mezzanines and platforms, and improve information to transit customers.
- **NEW STATIONS**
  New stations may be built on the Green Line to serve growing residential neighborhoods in the south and west. New stations in the Loop will be designed in the historic spirit exemplified by the existing Harold Washington Library Center and Quincy Street stations.
- **REBUILDING OF METRA ELECTRIC RANDOLPH STREET TERMINAL**
  The Randolph Street Terminal is being rebuilt to provide better passenger service.
- **INTERMODAL TRANSFER FACILITY AT LASALLE STREET STATION**
  Metra commuters arriving at La Salle Street Station must walk several blocks to board buses. To overcome this problem, an intermodal transfer facility for CTA buses will be provided using an existing parking lot immediately west of the station.
- **ACCESSIBILITY**
  All new and renovated facilities will comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). All transit stations will be wheelchair accessible. The use of low-floor bus rapid transit vehicles will greatly enhance accessibility by persons in wheelchairs and reduce the need for lifts.

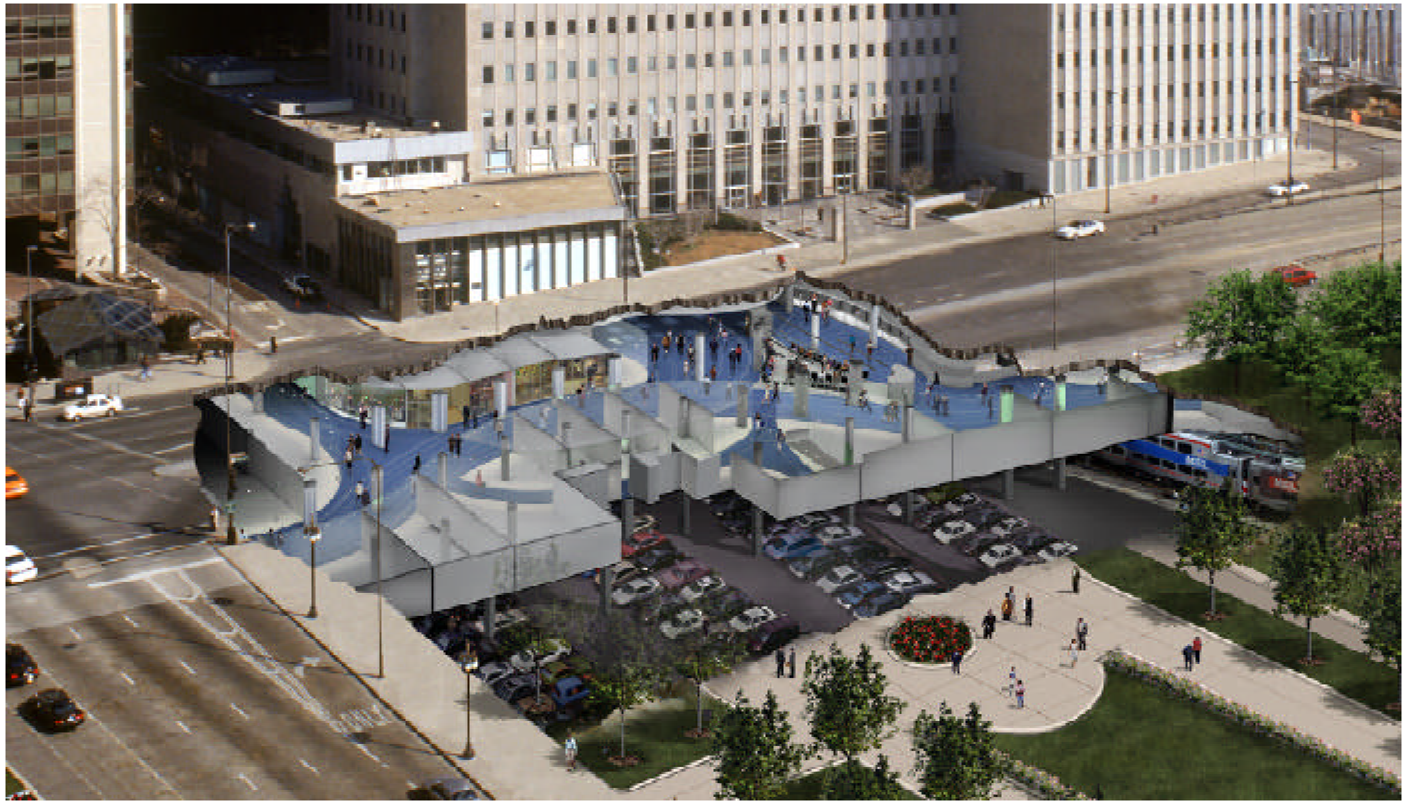

Figure 4.2.19
The Metra Electric Randolph Terminal is being reconstructed to provide better passenger service to the East Loop, Millenium Park and Illinois Center.

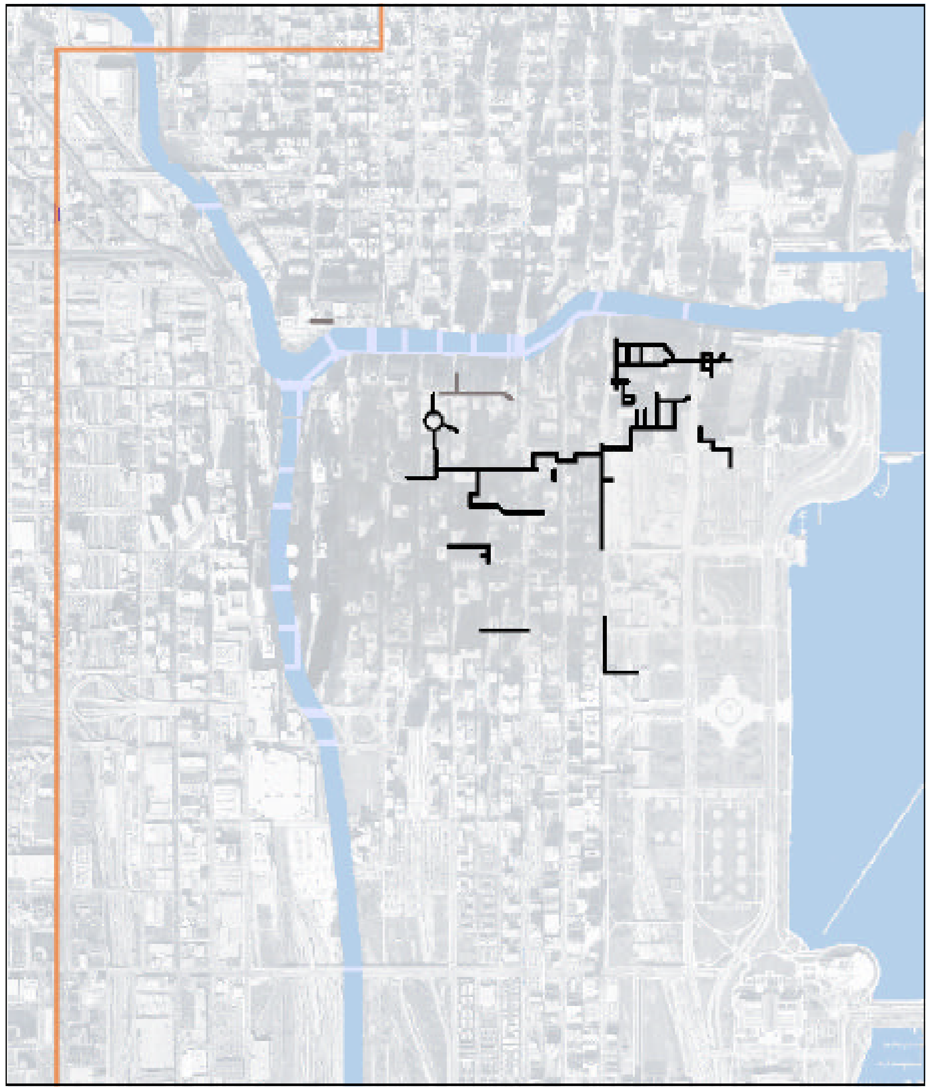

Figure 4.2.20
The existing pedway system

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

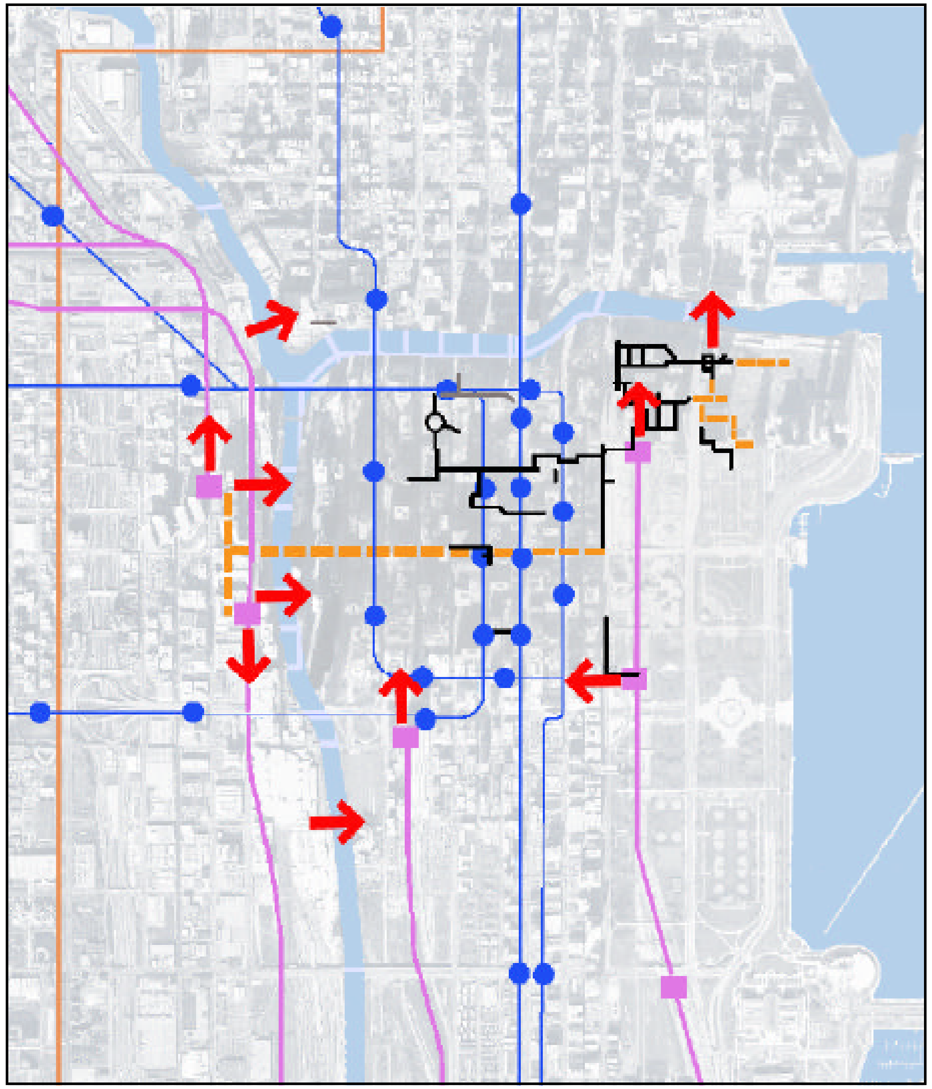

Figure 4.2.21
Pedestrian improvements will help to overcome physical barriers such as the Chicago River.

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

▬ Pedway
--- Potential Pedway Extensions
▬ Skyway
● CTA Rapid Transit
■ Metra Commuter Rail
→ Improved Pedestrian Connections

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Walkable City

Improve the Quality of the Pedestrian Environment

Key Recommendations:

- **Improve and extend sidewalk landscaping**
- **Encourage active street level uses, especially retail, in all buildings including parking structures.**
- **Ease pedestrian congestion by expanding the pedway system, riverwalk and footbridges, and by enhancing sidewalks.**

The Central Area's walkability is one of the things that makes it great. Many of its streets have generous sidewalks, attractive landscaping and lighting, and active ground floor uses such as stores that offer light and activity to the passerby. The walkability of the Central Area is part of its appeal, but also key to its efficiency: sidewalks are a city's most efficient transportation system, carrying up to four times as many people as vehicles on the same streets.

The pedestrian environment cannot be taken for granted. All streets in the Central Area should maintain pleasant sidewalk environments. Buildings that line them should have active street-level uses, well articulated and transparent facades, and frequent entrances at the ground floor. Parking garages should also have active uses at the street level. Surface parking lots should be avoided in the expanded Loop. In other parts of the Central Area they should be landscaped to obscure the break they create in the pedestrian environment. The number of driveways and curb cuts should also be limited in the Central Area to prevent conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

Sidewalks close to commuter rail and rapid transit have become increasingly congested. The following projects are proposed to ease pedestrian congestion:

- FOOT BRIDGE OVER THE CHICAGO RIVER
  A pedestrian bridge will be constructed over the Chicago River between Adams and Jackson streets to improve Union Station pedestrian circulation.
- RIVERWALK
  A continuous riverwalk will be constructed to provide an alternative to crowded Central Area sidewalks.
- PEDWAY EXPANSION
  The grade-separated pedway system in the heart of the Central Area will be expanded to provide easier access to rapid transit stations. This may include a Monroe Street pedestrian way.
- SIDEWALK ENHANCEMENTS
  New sidewalks adjacent to new office buildings and other developments will be designed to provide adequate space for peak flows, provide stronger landscaping, and reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles caused by curb cuts.

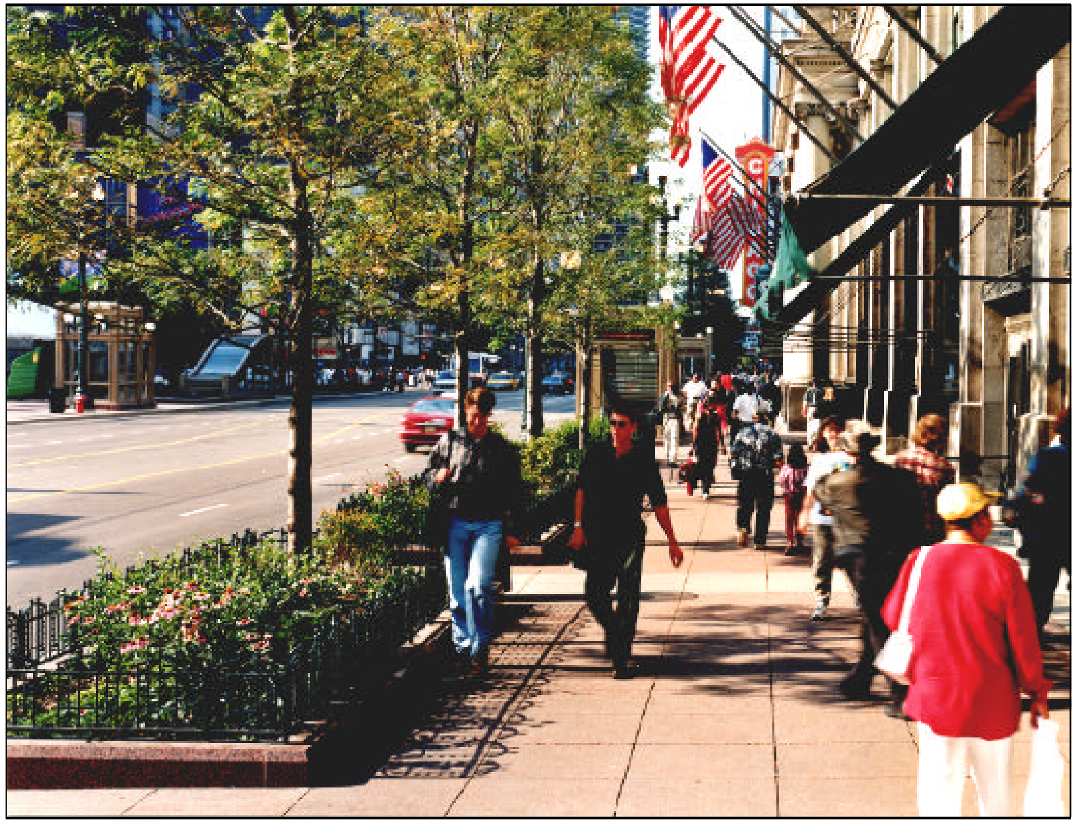

Figure 4.2.22
Keeping the downtown compact and walkable with appealing sidewalks supports the quality of life and efficient circulation that are keys to the Central Area's economic success.

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Figure 3.2.23 - 25
“Level of service” refers to traffic flow, with Level ‘A’ having the smoothest flow. The Level of Service decreases as congestion increases, with Level F being the most congested.

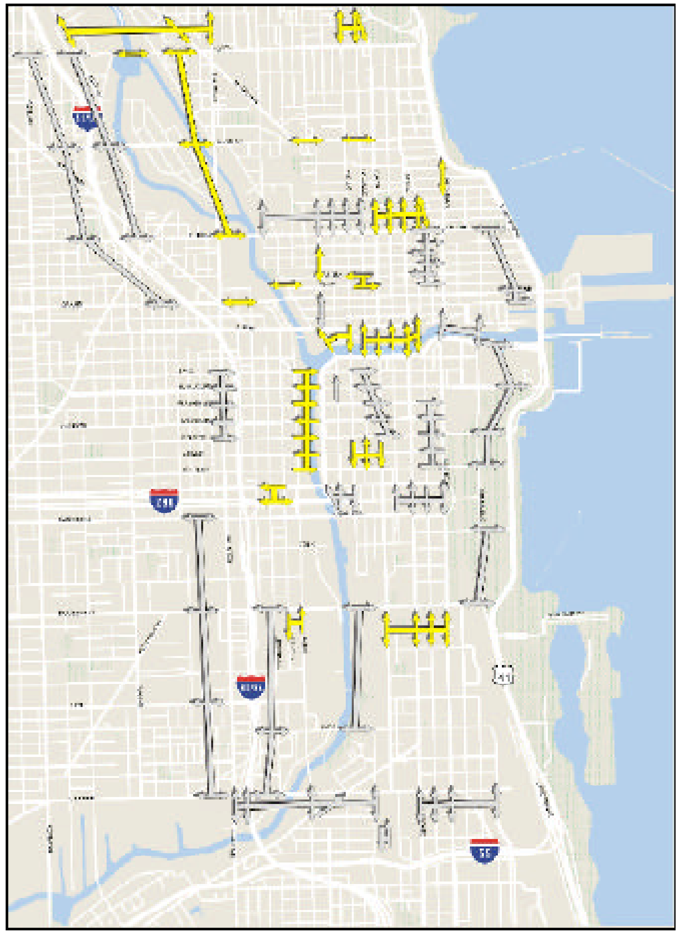

Figure 4.2.23
Levels of service at key intersections in the Central Area today.

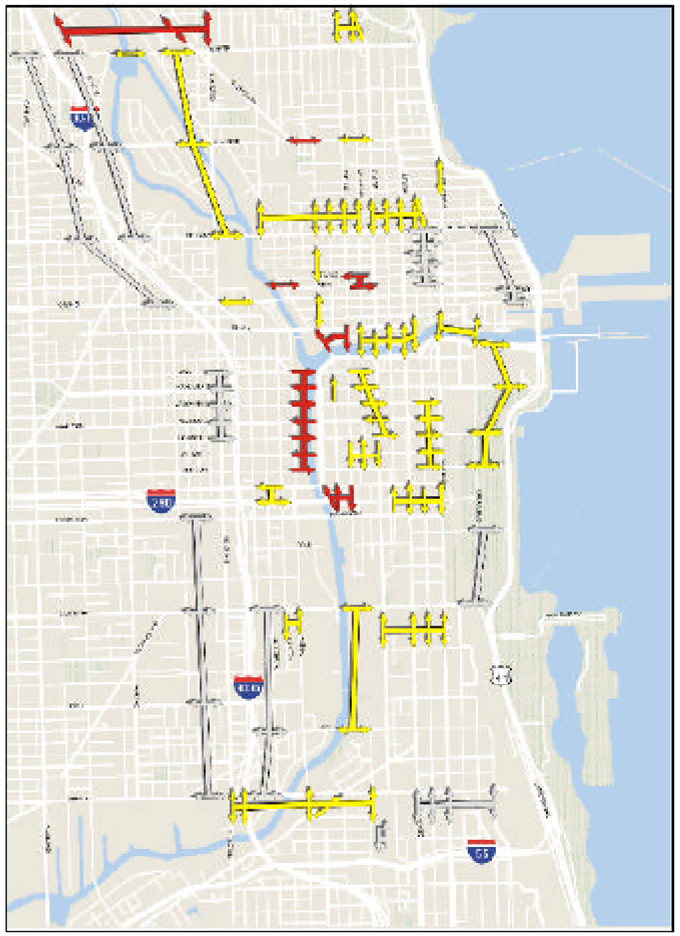

Figure 4.2.24
Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with added parking in the Loop.

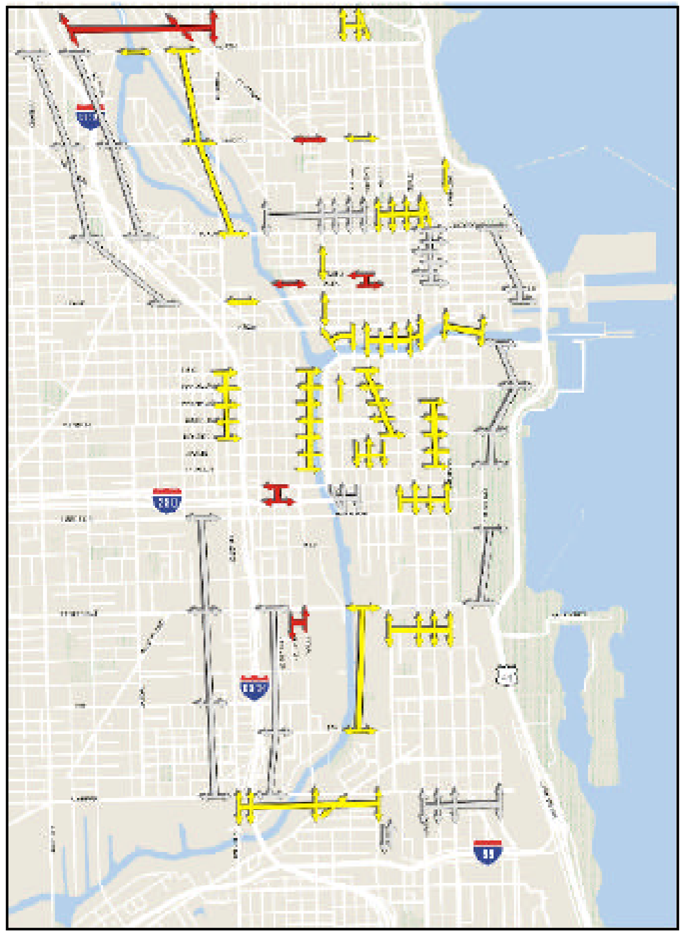

Figure 4.2.25
Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with no parking added in the Loop.

Level of Service ‘F’ at least once a day
Level of Service ‘E’ at least once a day
Level of Service ‘A’ thru ‘D’ all day

Cordon of Streets with direction of traffic

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Traffic Management

Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock

Key Recommendations

- **Improve traffic signaling to control gridlock**
- **Maximize off-street truck loading and delivery**
- **Expand the grid system where possible, and maintain alleys and limit cul-de-sacs to ensure efficient circulation**
- **Limit parking in the Central Loop to minimize traffic congestion**

While transit will be emphasized, growth will generate an estimated 56,000 new auto trips per day by 2020. The roadway system serving the Central Area is already built out with limited opportunity to build new roads. The geography that gives downtown Chicago its special character - its location between the river and lake - also limits automobile access as the capacity of the Central Area's famous bridges cannot be expanded. While there are opportunities to expand the street grid in the Near South Side, north of Congress Street there are few opportunities for additional streets.

The challenge for development in this context of limited roadway capacity is that the mix of uses that gives Chicago its vibrant character, also tends to require easy access to parking at multiple locations. The goal of the plan is to strike a balance between efficient circulation on roadways with limited capacity, and convenient parking access.

Street and Traffic Improvement Projects

- *Traffic Management Center*
  A new Traffic Management Center (TMC) on the Near West Side will monitor and control traffic signals throughout the Central Area and, in the future, citywide. TMC operators will use video cameras, street sensors and computers to coordinate signal timing and keep traffic moving efficiently and safely.
- *West Loop and Streeterville Signal Interconnects*
  The interconnected Central Area traffic signal system will extend beyond the Loop to the West Loop and Streeterville. This system will be tied to the TMC and will reduce delays at intersections.
- *South Branch Bridges*
  Bridges across the South Branch will be constructed at Polk, Taylor, and/or 16th streets.
- *Truck Loading*
  The growth in office, retail and other development will increase truck loading and deliveries. To maintain efficient traffic circulation in view of this challenge, the City will require a comprehensive policy regarding truck loading and deliveries. A major study will evaluate this issue.
- *Expand the Grid System*
  As the South Loop and Near South grow, existing streets will be extended and new alleyways added. In particular, the Wells - Wentworth connector will be a Near South neighborhood collector street, linking these new east-west streets to the Loop and Chinatown. Throughout the Central Area, existing alleys and streets will not be vacated or cul-de-saced to maintain continuity and efficient circulation.

Parking Policy

Establish appropriate limits on non-accessory parking. Existing policy restricts non-accessory, free standing garages and reduces the number of parking spaces required in new development within the inner core of the Central Area Parking District. This area begins half a block inside the Loop elevated structure. The outer core of the Central Area Parking District discourages surface parking lots.

The policy offers several advantages:

- It encourages commuters to use transit rather than private autos, increasing traffic efficiency in the core, reducing auto congestion and air pollution.
- It makes maximum use of developable land and ensures that the business core remains compact, one of downtown Chicago's major competitive advantages.
- It minimizes conflicts between pedestrians and buses with automobiles using parking facilities.

Managing New Parking

If additional parking is developed to accommodate growth, traffic models project that rush hour gridlock will occur at key points in the Central Area, including most bridges. To avoid this, it will be necessary to control the total number of Loop parking spaces by further restricting non-accessory parking structures and directing most of the additional parking to areas outside the Loop. There will also be opportunities for parking within the Expanded West Loop near the expressways.

Parking Structure Design

Any new parking structure in the downtown must adhere to the design guidelines outlined in the Chicago Parking Garage Ordinance. A parking garage should be designed to respect its surrounding context with regard to materials, scale, proportion and orientation of openings. The ground floor of the structure should have active uses such as retail and lobby functions, and should incorporate canopies, clear glazing and special lighting to add interest at the sidewalk level. Curb cuts and driveways ought to be minimized to allow for pedestrian movement; and alley access is recommended, if possible.

A study addressing traffic and parking issues in the Central Area is currently underway. The study has four components:

· Determining the unique parking and transit needs of specific user groups and different Central Area districts.
· Developing a comprehensive picture of parking and transit trends and issues.
· Developing summary estimates of parking and transit needs, and outlining strategy and policy alternatives for transportation in the Central Area.
· Researching the range and type of available funding strategies for proposed transit improvements.

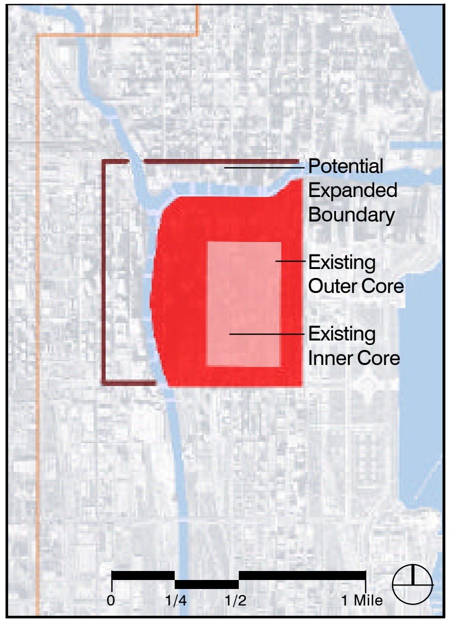

Figure 4.2.26
Growth will bring an estimated 56,000 new cars to downtown per day. Road capacity is limited, and in order to prevent gridlock it will be necessary to establish limits on non-accessory parking in the Expanded Loop.

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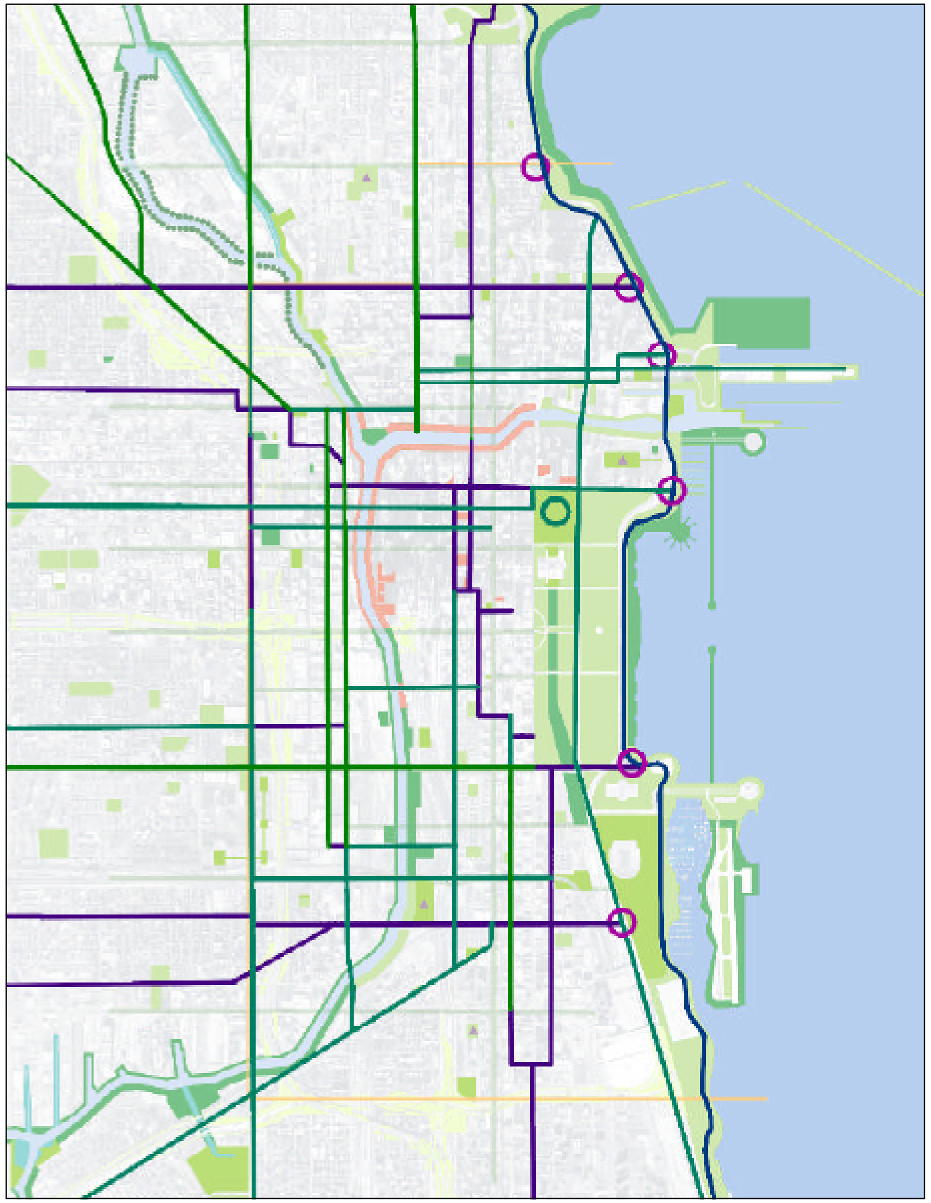

Key for Figure 3.2.27

- 🟩 Bicycle Lanes - Existing
- 🟩 Bicycle Lanes - Proposed
- 🟪 Bicycle Routes
- 🟦 Bicycle Paths - Off Street
- ○ Lakefront Access
- ○ Lakefront Bike Station

Figure 4.2.27
The existing and proposed Bicycle Path System

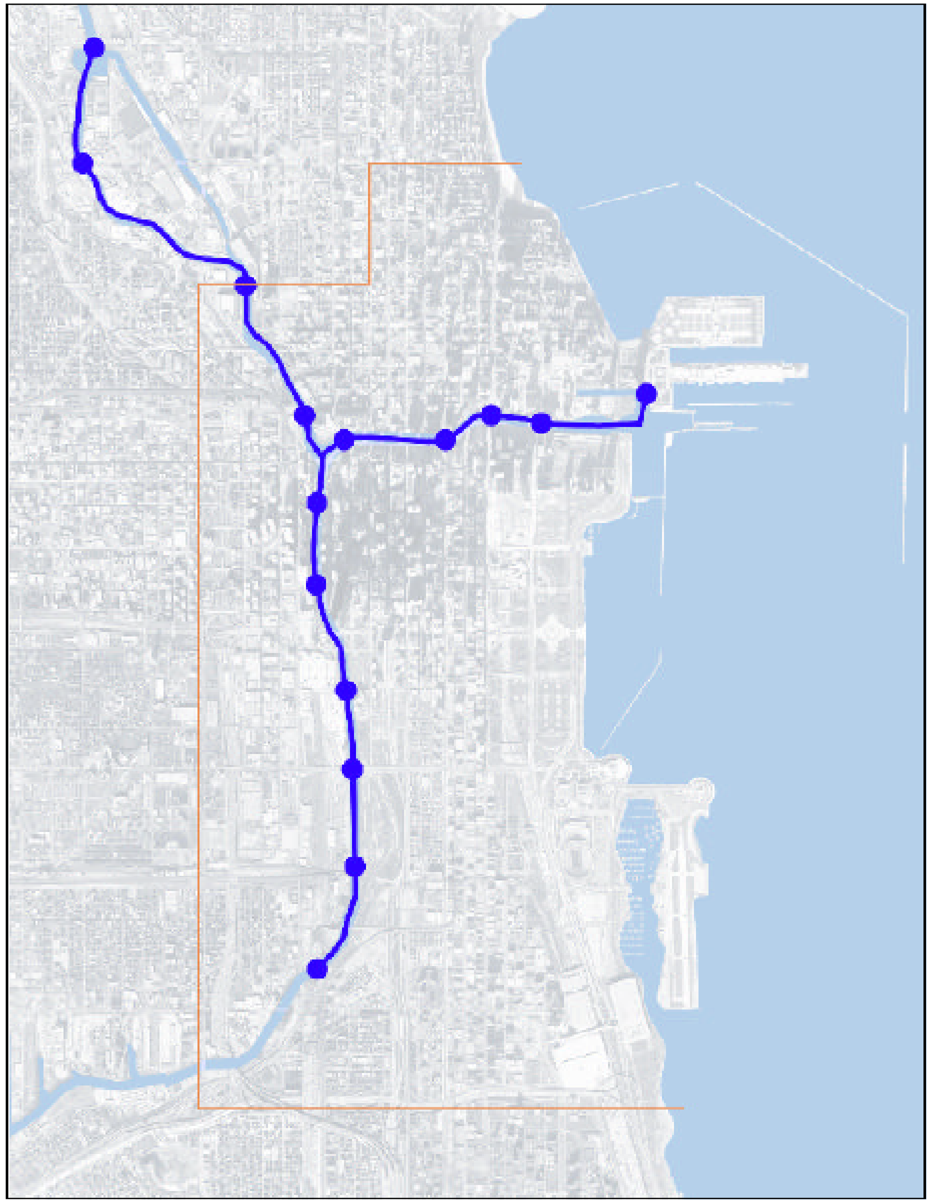

Figure 4.2.28
The future Water Taxi System

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Alternative Transportation

Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis

Key Recommendations:

- **Expand and improve the network of bicycle paths**
- **Expand the water taxi system to provide a commuting alternative**

Bike paths and water taxis will primarily be used in warm weather months. These commuting alternatives provide a great outdoor experience amid the bustle of the Central Area. They reduce demand on other transit systems that may be carrying increased numbers of summer tourists and visitors to special events. Cycling rather than driving offers the added benefit of cleaner air on what may be summer Ozone Action Days. There is enormous potential for cycling in the Central Area. There are hundreds of thousands of people living within 3 miles, a 20 minute bicycle ride, of the Central Area.

BIKE PATHS AND W ATER TAXIS OFFER A PLEASANT COMMUTING ALTERNATIVE

BICYCLE PATHS

The proposed Central Area bikeway system includes special pavement markings and signage on selected streets and the well known bicycle paths through the Lakefront parks. A bicycle station with bicycle parking, showers and lockers, will be provided in the West Loop and at Millennium Park.

To create a continuous connection for pedestrians and cyclists a new bicycle/pedestrian bridge over the Chicago River's Main Branch east of Lake Shore Drive known as the DuSable Flyover will be constructed. This will enable pedestrians and bicyclists to travel from the north Lakefront bicycle path, through the Navy Pier/DuSable park area, to the Lakefront path south of the river without having to cross any streets, creating a connection between Navy Pier, Monroe Harbor and Museum Campus.

South of the Museum Campus, a greenway constructed on the St. Charles Airline parallel to 16th Street will provide access from the Lakefront to the Chicago River and neighborhoods in the Near South and further west.

WATER TAXIS

Water taxis, like the riverwalk, can provide excellent alternative transit between commuter rail and downtown office and cultural destinations. Water taxi system improvements will consist primarily of docks at key embarkation points. The docks shown in the diagram are for illustrative purposes only; actual locations will depend on river traffic management considerations and the willingness of riverside property owners to participate in the program. Water taxis are subject to city regulations but are operated by private owners. Fares and schedules may be coordinated with the other transit systems in the Central Area.

Figure 4.2.29
Bicycling in the Central Area will increase as a viable form of commuting. Hundreds of thousands of people live within a 20 minute bicycle ride of the Central Area. Cycling can reduce emissions, reduce demand on transit, and provide exercise.

Figure 4.2.30
Water Taxis on the Chicago River provide convenient access to the West Loop transit stations.

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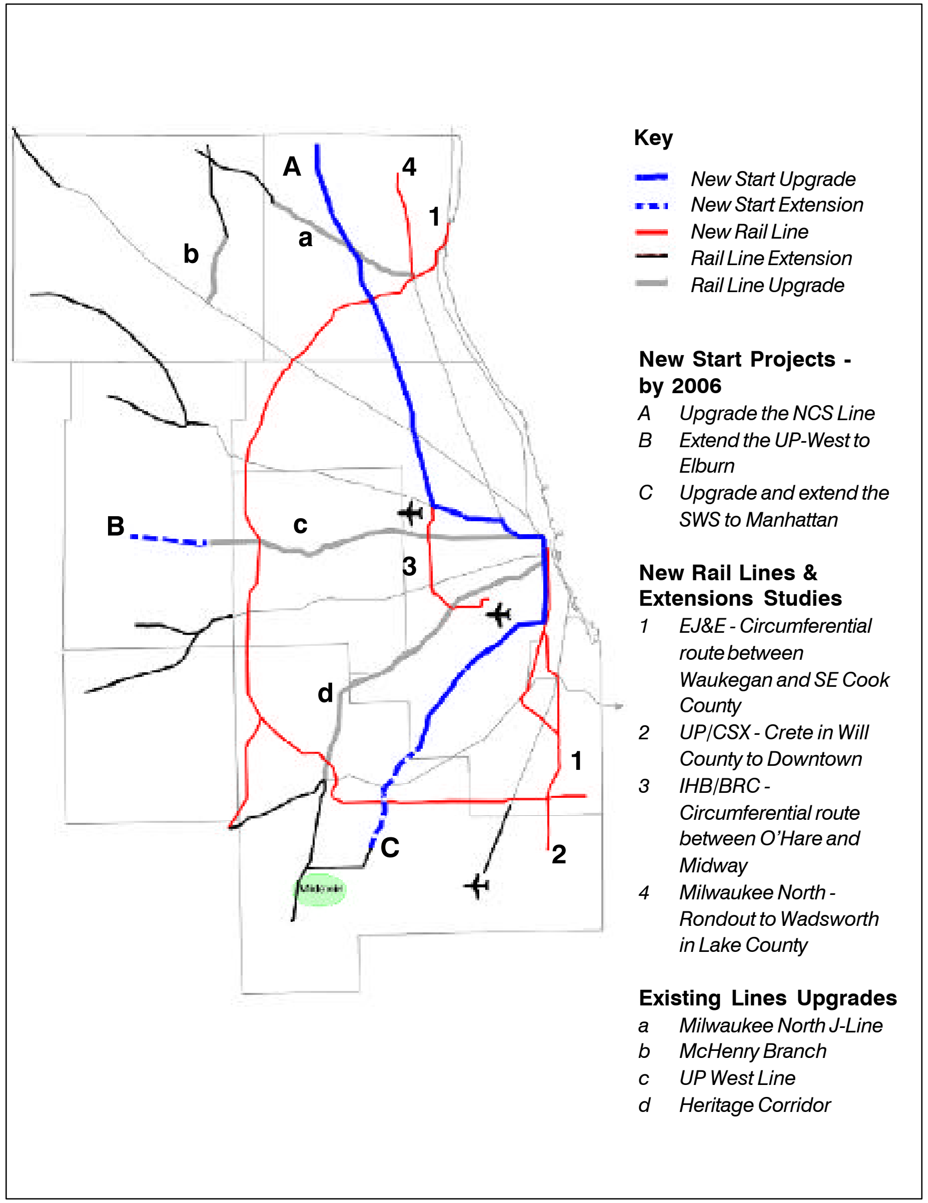
A
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B
c
3
d
1
C
2
Key
New Start Upgrade
New Start Extension
New Rail Line
Rail Line Extension
Rail Line Upgrade
New Start Projects - by 2006
A Upgrade the NCS Line
B Extend the UP-West to Elburn
C Upgrade and extend the SWS to Manhattan
New Rail Lines & Extensions Studies
1 EJ&E - Circumferential route between Waukegan and SE Cook County
2 UP/CSX - Crete in Will County to Downtown
3 IHB/BRC - Circumferential route between O'Hare and Midway
4 Milwaukee North - Rondout to Wadsworth in Lake County
Existing Lines Upgrades
a Milwaukee North J-Line
b McHenry Branch
c UP West Line
d Heritage Corridor

Figure 4.2.31
Potential Metra Extension Projects

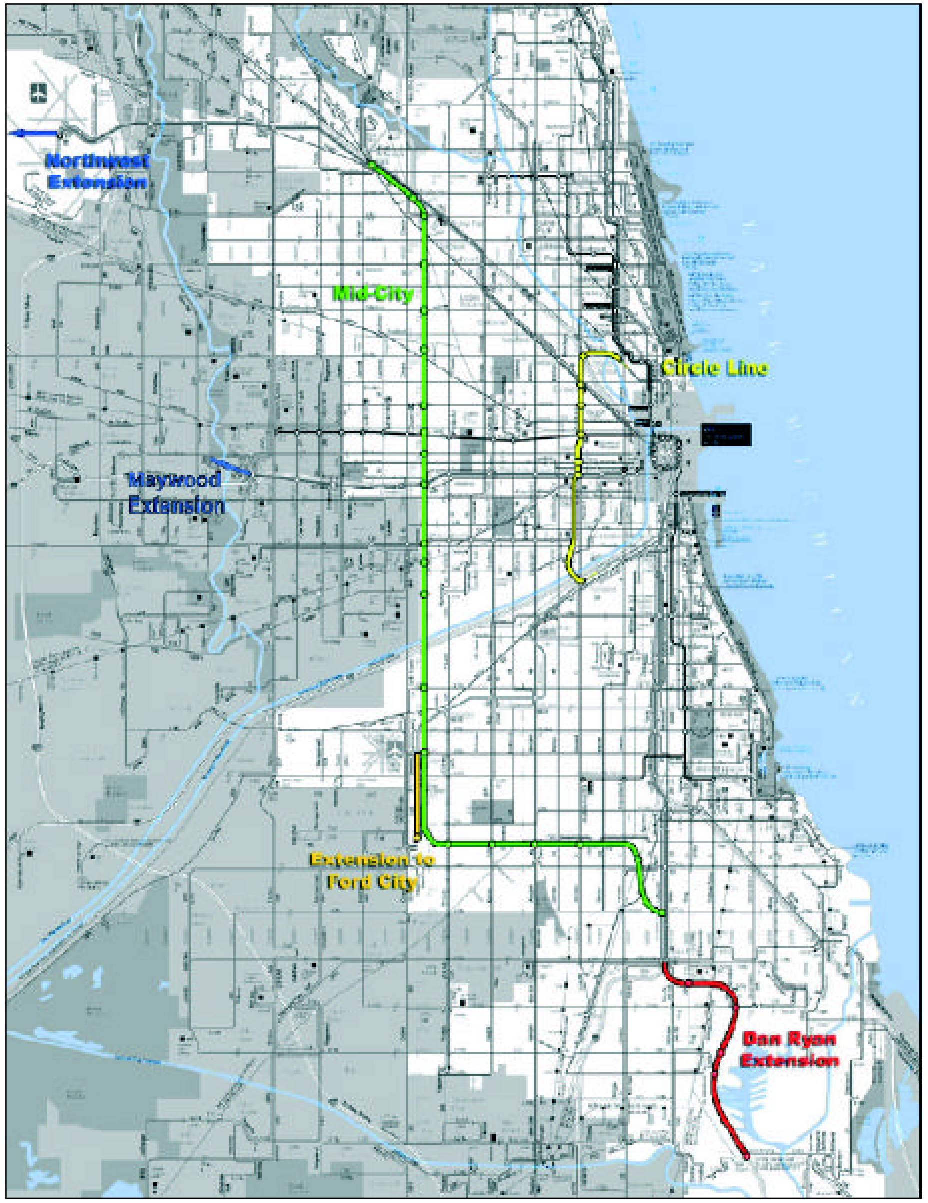
Northwest Extension
Mid-City
Circle Line
Maywood Extension
Extension to Ford City
Dan Ryan Extension

Figure 4.2.32
Potential CTA Rail Projects

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Metropolitan Area Expansion Projects

Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.

Key Recommendations:

- **Extend CTA rail lines to improve access to the Central Area from outlying neighborhoods**
- **Improve signaling to increase capacity**
- **Reroute Metra service to reduce conflicts with freight traffic**
- **Upgrade passenger facilities including stations and platforms**

Proposed CTA Rail Extensions and New Lines

CTA rail line extensions will make the Central Area more accessible from outlying areas.

- **ORANGE LINE EXTENSION**
  The extension of the Orange Line from Midway Airport to Ford City shopping center will make transit more attractive for trips to the Central Area from the far Southwest Side.
- **RED LINE EXTENSION TO CHICAGO'S FAR SOUTH SIDE**
  Several routes are being investigated, including a route along the Bishop Ford Expressway to 130th Street.
- **BLUE LINE EXTENSION**
  An extension of the Blue Line northwest from O'Hare to Schaumburg will reduce travel time between destinations outside the City and downtown. An extension of the Blue Line west from Forest Park to Maywood could incorporate a large intermodal transit center and increase transit capacity to the Central Area.
- **YELLOW LINE EXTENSION**
  Extending the Yellow Line from Dempster to Old Orchard Mall will make transit more attractive for trips to the Central Area from the Northern suburbs and for commuters on the Edens Expressway.
- **NEW CIRCLE LINE**
  The Circle Line is a new “super loop” around and through the Central Area of Chicago, connecting from Chinatown to North Avenue along Paulina Street. The 6.6-mile line would use a combination of existing rail segments and new subway and elevated links. The line would provide convenient shortcuts for CTA customers making cross-town trips while also improving access to the periphery of the Central Area. In addition, the Circle Line is designed to connect with many Metra commuter lines to the suburbs.
- **NEW MID-CITY TRANSITWAY**
  A 22-mile circumferential line will provide fast connections from outlying neighborhoods and provide easy connections to Metra and CTA radial lines to downtown.
- **NEW OGDEN AVENUE TRANSIT CORRIDOR**
  Establishing a modern streetcar line to connect the Central Area and Southwest Side via Ogden Avenue could enhance transit service between Navy Pier, Streeterville, River North, the West Loop, United Center, and the West Side Medical Center.

CTA Rail Signaling Upgrades

Improved signaling is proposed for the Red Line and the O'Hare branch of the Blue Line. The CTA's existing rail signaling system permits operation of trains at three-minute intervals. Upgraded signaling will permit two-minute headways to provide a 50% increase in train service. The increase in train service will require expanded yard capacity and the purchase of additional rolling stock.

Metra Commuter Rail Improvements

Many Metra commuter rail routes share trackage with freight traffic. Business Leaders for Transportation, a regional business coalition, anticipate "an 80% increase in Chicago area freight traffic over the next 20 years.” Freight traffic is already a major constraint on some of the most heavily traveled routes, such as the BNSF line to Aurora. Substantially increasing the route capacity is difficult. Central Area rail terminals are also approaching the limits of their train-handling capacity. The following projects are proposed to provide alternative service and eliminate bottlenecks:

- **REROUTE SOUTHWEST SERVICE FROM UNION STATION TO LASALLE STREET STATION**
  LaSalle Street Station has excess capacity, while Union Station is approaching its limit. Rerouting Southwest Service will free up platforms on the south side of Union Station and provide faster service. Some trackwork at 74th Street is required to permit this change. Additional work is needed on the Southwest Service to bypass busy freight junctions.
- **PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PLATFORMS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF UNION STATION**
  The Amtrak-Union Station Capacity Study currently underway will investigate all options and permit an appropriate expansion plan to be developed. Possibilties include:
  - West Loop Transportation Center tunnel under Clinton Street, as previously described
  - Platforms under the old main post office between Harrison and Van Buren
- **ELIMINATE RAIL/RAIL CROSSINGS AT KEY LOCATIONS.**
  Metra lines cross other commuter or freight routes at the same elevation at several points. The scheduling of trains to avoid conflicts limits the capacity of these lines. To eliminate such bottlenecks, "flyovers" are proposed at the following locations: Kensington on Metra Electric South Shore, Grand Crossing, Englewood, Brighton Park.
- **UPGRADE NORTH CENTRAL SERVICE**
  Improvements to tracks and interlockings will provide for expansion of the North Central Line between Union Station and Antioch.
- **EJ & E CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROUTE**
  This line will intersect and link with lines radiating from the Central Area, allowing more people to reach the Central Area by rail rather than car.

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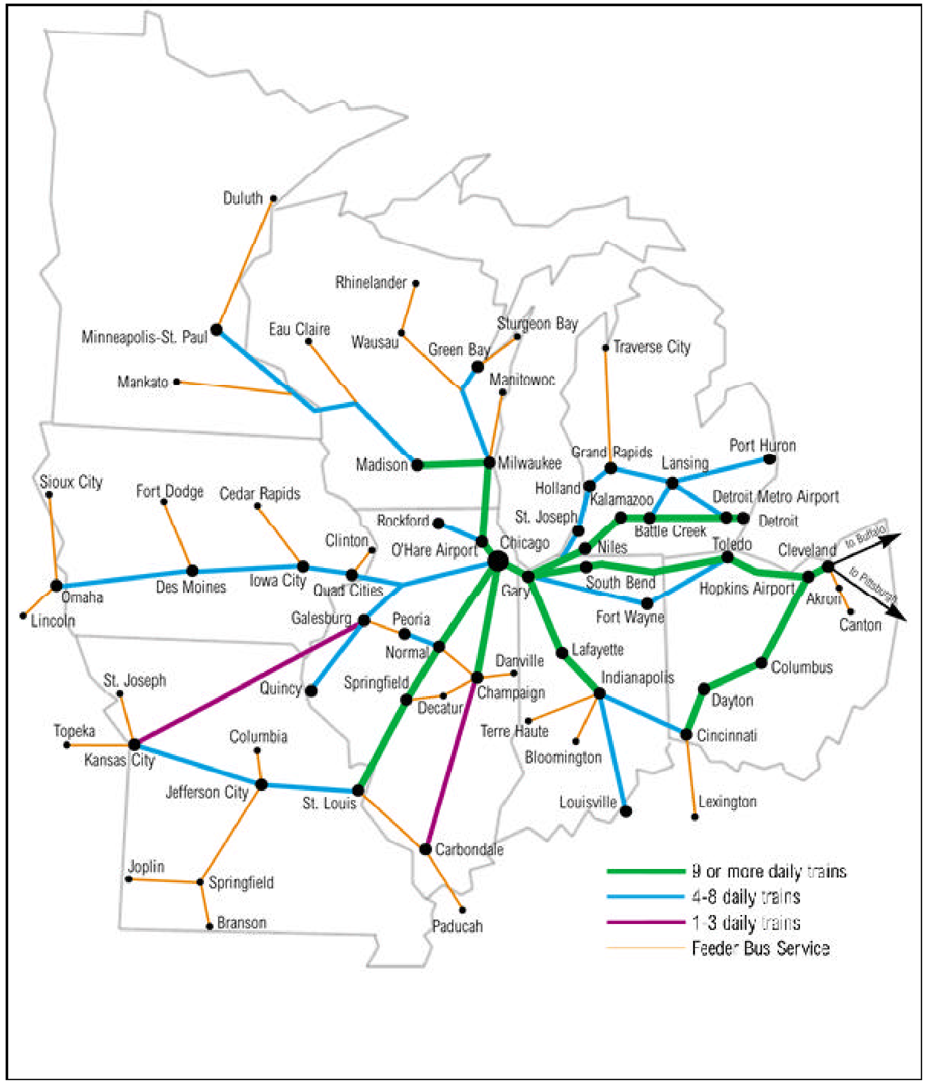
Duluth
Rhinelander
Minneapolis-St. Paul
Eau Claire
Wausau
Green Bay
Sturgeon Bay
Traverse City
Mankato
Manitowoc
Madison
Milwaukee
Grand Rapids
Port Huron
Lansing
Holland
Kalamazoo
Detroit Metro Airport
Detroit
Sioux City
Fort Dodge
Cedar Rapids
Rockford
St. Joseph
Battle Creek
Clinton
O'Hare Airport
Chicago
Niles
Toledo
Cleveland
to Buffalo
to Pittsburgh
Omaha
Des Moines
Iowa City
Quad Cities
Gary
South Bend
Hopkins Airport
Akron
Lincoln
Galesburg
Peoria
Fort Wayne
Canton
Normal
Lafayette
Danville
Columbus
St. Joseph
Quincy
Springfield
Champaign
Indianapolis
Decatur
Dayton
Topeka
Columbia
Terre Haute
Cincinnati
Kansas City
Bloomington
Jefferson City
St. Louis
Louisville
Lexington
Carbondale
Joplin
Springfield
Branson
Paducah
9 or more daily trains
4-8 daily trains
1-3 daily trains
Feeder Bus Service

Figure 4.2.33
The Midwest Regional High-Speed Rail Initiative

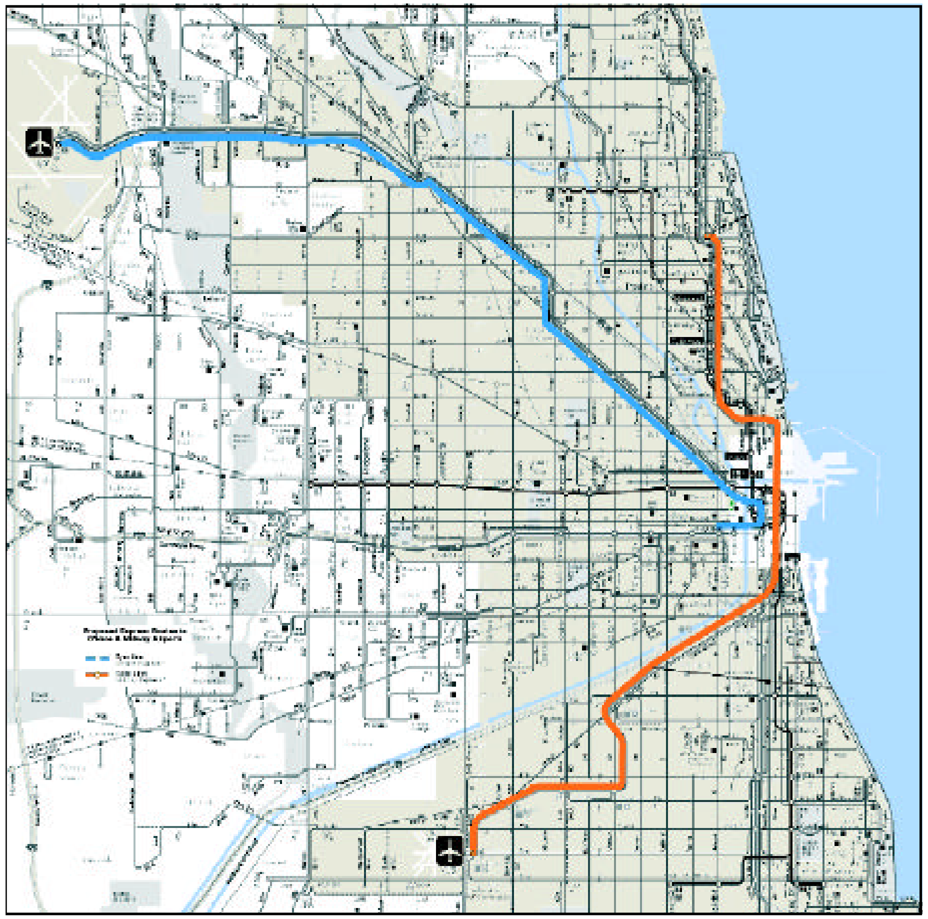

Figure 4.2.34
Potential Express Rail to O'Hare and Midway Airports

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Midwest and National Enhancement Projects

Inter-city enhancement projects will improve national and international connections.

Key Recommendations:

- **Facilitate development of the regional high speed rail system.**
- **Create express rail service to O'Hare and Midway airports from a central downtown terminal located between State and Dearborn in the Loop.**

High Speed Rail

THE PROPOSED REGIONAL HIGH SPEED RAIL SYSTEM WILL USE CHICAGO AS A HUB

The proposed Midwest regional rail system will connect Chicago with the ten largest metropolitan areas of the Midwest and numerous smaller cities en route. Trains will operate at speeds in excess of 110 MPH and would reduce travel times substantially. In downtown Chicago the high speed rail network will be a catalyst for the anticipated office and retail growth in the West Loop area.

Airport Express

EXPRESS RAIL SERVICE TO AIRPORTS FROM A DOWNTOWN AIRPORT TERMINAL OFFERING BAGGAGE CHECK-IN WILL GIVE THE CENTRAL AREA A POWERFUL COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AS A PLACE TO DO BUSINESS

Chicago is unique among U.S. cities in providing local rail service to both its major airports. On a typical weekday in 2000, nearly 9,000 riders boarded the Blue Line at O'Hare, making it one of the CTA's busiest stops. The existing service, in which trains make all stops, requires more than 45 minutes for the trip from O'Hare to the Loop.

As part of a comprehensive effort to improve access to all of Chicago's aviation facilities, an express rail operation is planned to connect a new downtown terminal with O'Hare and Midway Airports. Express trains would operate over the O'Hare branch of the CTA Blue Line for the 18-mile journey to the airport. Dedicated tracks will be used in key locations for faster service.

This presents an outstanding business opportunity for Chicago. The availability of fast, convenient and comfortable rail service will give the Loop a powerful global advantage as a place to hold business meetings and locate corporate headquarters and other facilities.

Midway Express trains would operate over a portion of the existing Red Line in the State Street Subway and the Orange Line to Midway Airport. The service would utilize an existing unused connection near 16th Street to transition between the Red Line and the Orange Line. Express trains will be able to operate with little congestion due to existing Orange Line station spacing.

Both O'Hare and Midway express service would use dedicated high-speed trains with special passenger amenities and high security cars to carry checked baggage. The trains would operate from a new terminal to be located between State and Dearborn in the Loop. Special platform doors would lead directly to the new downtown terminal, where passengers would be able to obtain a seat assignment and boarding pass from most carriers and check baggage through to their final destination. Airline flight and city information would be available at the station and aboard the train. The airports' checked luggage would be transferred directly to secured conveyors in existing tunnels leading to airline terminals.

The O'Hare Express would make the trip in less than 30 minutes, faster than any other form of ground travel. Trains would operate every 15 minutes from approximately 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Midway Airport Express service is expected to run every 20 minutes between 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. At the Midway rail station a new pedestrianway and secure baggage conveyer will allow for convenient passenger connections.

The O'Hare Express offers numerous advantages:

- Funding. As a premium-fare service built as part of the planned airport expansion, the O'Hare Express would have access to two revenue sources not available to most transit projects - Federal Aviation Administration airport funding and revenue bonds secured by fare income.
- Support for other transit improvements. The upgraded signaling needed to permit express trains to pass locals would also permit operation of local trains at two-minute intervals rather than the existing three, thereby increasing capacity on the Blue Line.

Figure 4.2.35
Trains used in the Midwest High-Speed Rail Initiative may be similar to the Acela Trains used in the Northeast Corridor System.

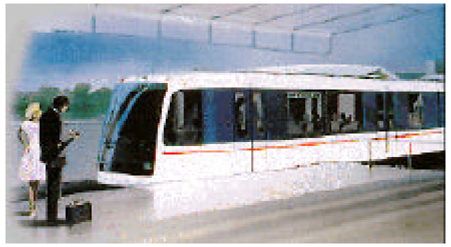

Figure 4.2.36
Express Rail Service from a central downtown Airport Terminal to Midway and O'Hare Airports will use dedicated train cars with special passenger amenities.

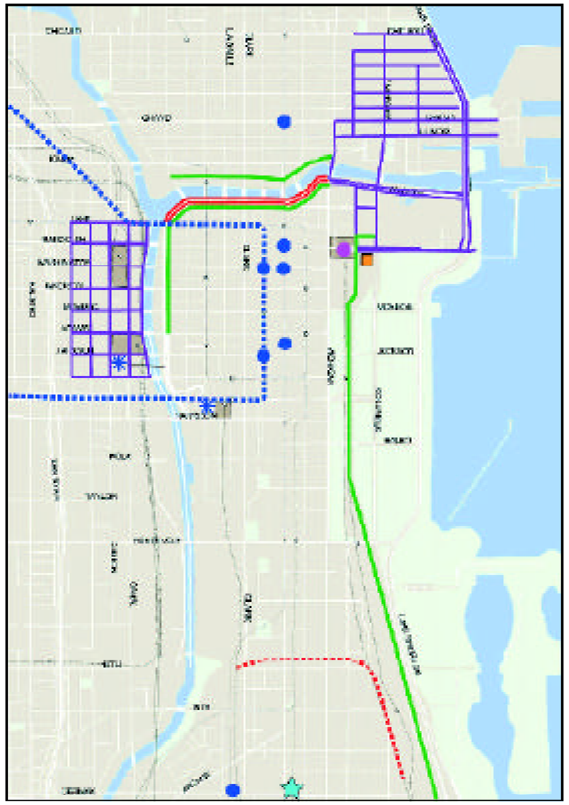

Figure 4.2.37
Phase 1 Transportation Improvements
Years 2002-2006

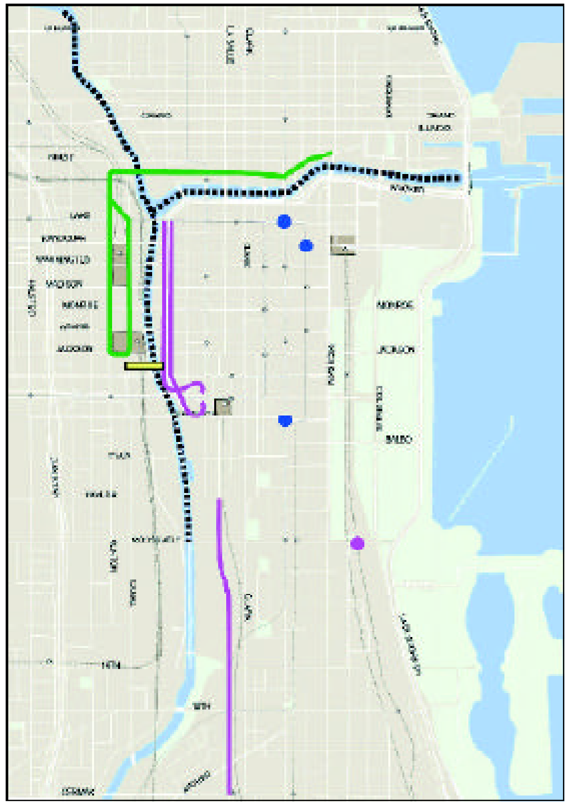

Figure 4.2.38
Phase 2 Transportation Improvements
Years 2007-2011

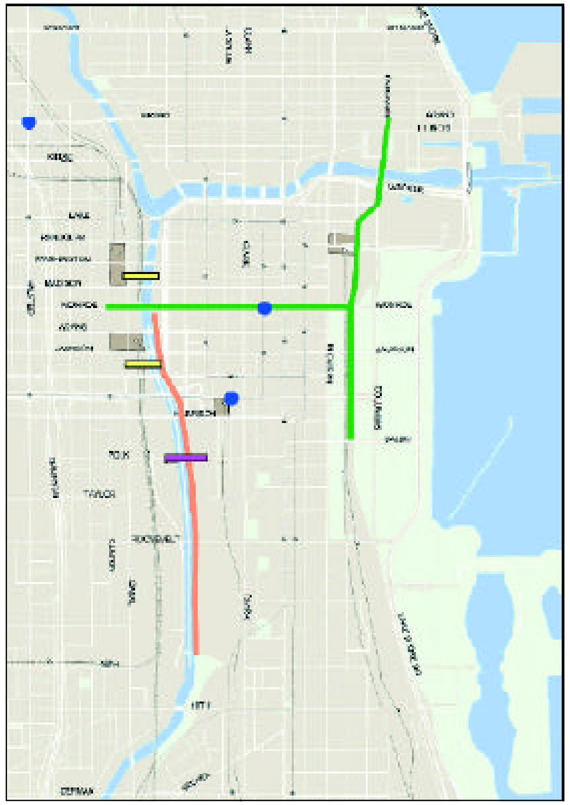

Figure 4.2.39
Phase 3 Transportation Improvements
Years 2012-2016

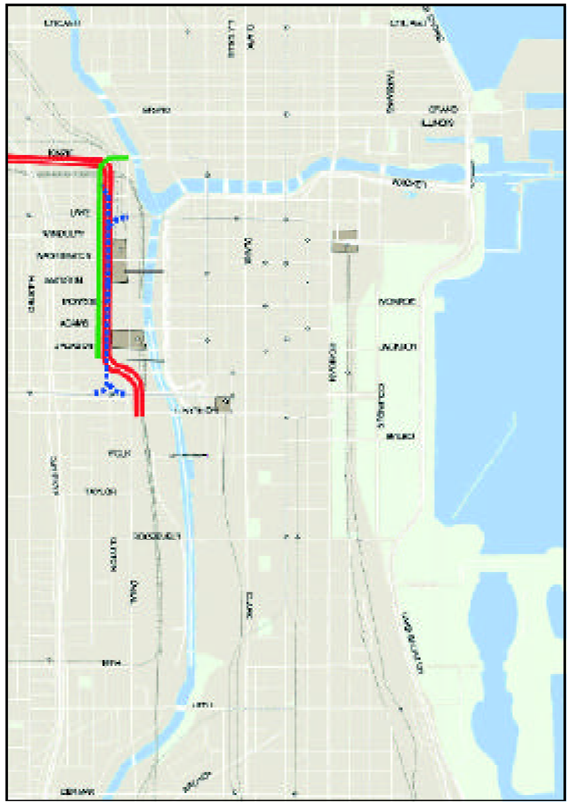

Figure 4.2.40
Phase 4 Transportation Improvements
Years 2017-2021

KEY FOR PHASING DIAGRAMS

- ⊛ CTA Station - Existing
- ○ Metra Station - Existing
- ▨ Metra Terminal - Existing
- ★ New CTA Station
- ● CTA Station Renewal
- ✳ Intermodal Center
- ● Metra Station Renewal
- 🟧 Bike Station
- ━ Bus Rapid Transit
- - - O'Hare Express
- ═ Pedestrian Bridge
- ━ Riverwalk
- ━ Roadway Improvement
- ─ Signal System Roadway
- - - Reserved Right-of-Way
- ■■■ Water Taxi Route

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Conclusion

Phasing of Transportation Improvements

Transportation improvements will be built in phases to provide increased levels of service as new development occurs. The following phasing schedule assigns illustrative dates to some of the proposed projects. Others will be added to the phasing schedule as funding permits and demand requires.

PHASE 1 (2002-2006)
- Resumed Lower Wacker express bus service
- Traffic Management Center
- Carroll Avenue transitway
- Pedestrian improvements
- Modernize Randolph and Roosevelt Road stations on Metra Electric
- Renovate CTA rapid transit stations (ongoing program through all four phases)
- Signal interconnects throughout Central Area
- Upgraded on-street transitways
- Protect rights-of-way
- Downtown Airport Terminal / Airport Express station
- Begin Circle Line

PHASE 2 (2007-2011)
- Wells-Wentworth connector
- Pedestrian bridge across South Branch at Union Station
- Expanded water taxi service
- Bicycle station in West Loop
- Complete the Circle Line

PHASE 3 (2012-2016)
- Monroe Street busway
- Bridge over South Branch at Taylor or Polk

PHASE 4 (2017-2021)
- West Loop Transportation Center

Next Steps

The following next steps should be taken to ensure the transportation plan moves forward:
- Continue feasibility studies
- Protect rights-of-way for future transportation corridors
- Estimate capital and operation costs
- Continue to develop implementation and funding plans
- Build consensus around transportation plan funding
- Complete Central Area parking study

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Chapter 4 : THEME 3

Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect Waterfronts and Open Spaces to create great public places

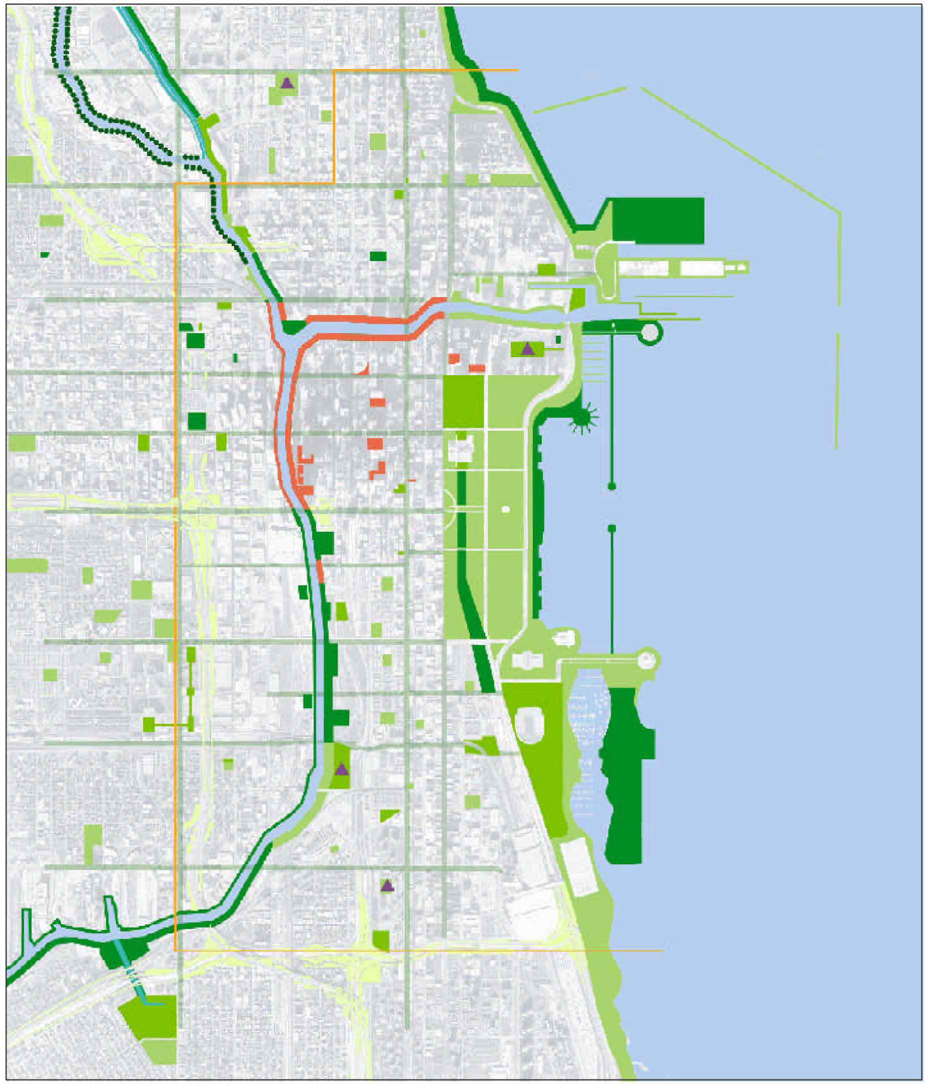
Figure 4.3.1
Central Area Open Space

Open spaces and rich landscaping make the Central Area livable and help to attract business and visitors. Chicago's lakefront park system is known worldwide. In the 21st century it will also become known for its outstanding continuous riverfront open space.

🟩 Open Space - Existing
🟩 Open Space - Planned
🟩 Open Space - Envisioned
🟦 Vision for Wetlands along the River
🟨 Landscaped Freeways
●● Landscaped Riverbanks
🟥 Plazas and Riverwalk
🟩 Major Landscaped streets

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

CENTRAL AREA OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES



CENTRAL AREA OPEN SPACE SYSTEMS

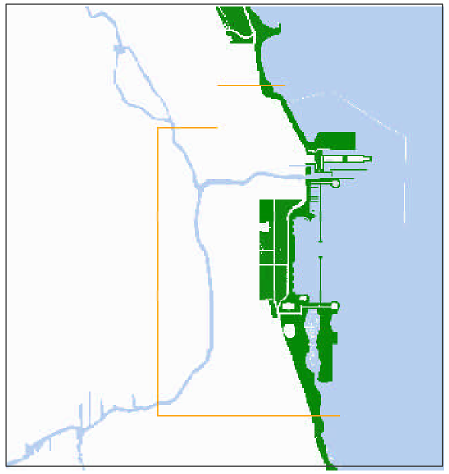


Figure 4.3.2 Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's great public space

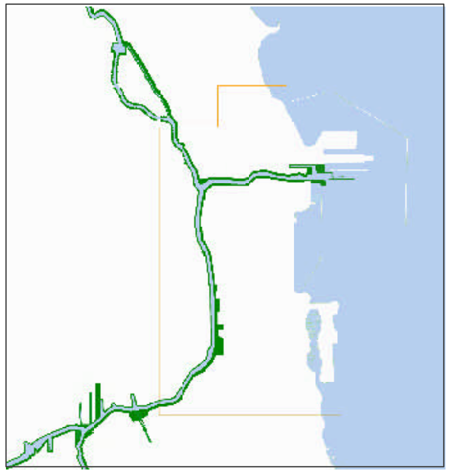


Figure 4.3.3 Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous park system

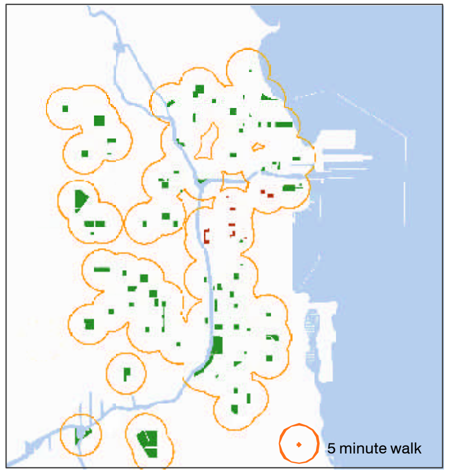


Figure 4.3.4 Create the next generation of parks and plazas

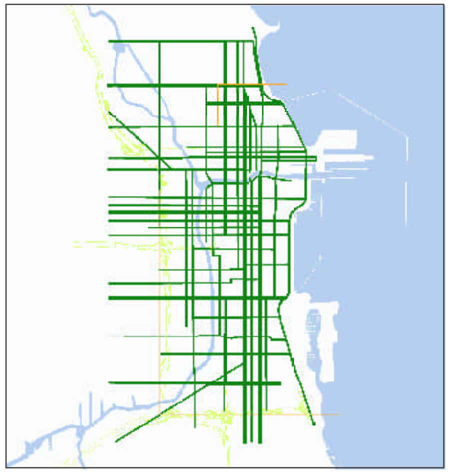


Figure 4.3.5 Complete the framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards.

Theme 3: Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect Waterfronts and Open Spaces to create great public places.

Guiding Principles

- **THE LAKEFRONT**
  Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- **THE RIVERFRONT**
  Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- **PARKS AND PLAZAS**
  Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- **GREEN STREETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**
  Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

As the Central Area grows, new open space and parks will be required. Access to green space is a basic human need. It is particularly important in the Central Area, where most streets lack the grassy parkways and yards of outlying residential neighborhoods. Downtown parks provide beauty to the hundreds of thousands of people who pass through the Central Area every day. They soften the urban environment and make downtown Chicago a more desirable place to live, work, and visit.

The Central Area cannot accommodate the same amount or types of open space as other parts of Chicago. There are fewer families with children, but more visitors and workers. The downtown open space system and the design of individual parks will reflect these unique needs and provide access to a park or open space within a five-minute walk of everyone living or working in the Central Area. The Central Area will also reflect Chicago's high standards for the design and quality of public open space.

The City of Chicago's Cityspace Plan established a hierarchy of varying scales and functions:

- Magnet parks - lakefront parks attracting people from throughout the metropolitan area. Grant Park and Burnham Park serve this purpose in the Central Area.
- Regional parks - parks with fieldhouses serving several adjacent neighborhoods. The Central Area has two such parks within its borders, Ping Tom Park on the South Branch of the Chicago River, and the proposed Lakeshore East Park at Illinois Center, and another close by, Seward Park at Division and Orleans streets. Ping Tom Park is slated for expansion, as discussed below.
- Neighborhood parks - parks serving nearby residents. A number of such parks are to be constructed throughout the Central Area.
- Campus parks - green space on public school grounds serving nearby residents. Cermak Elementary and Teachers Academy will provide such a park at Cermak Avenue and State Street.
- Plazas/squares - outdoor spaces serving nearby office workers. Most such spaces are built by private developers under the City's "zoning bonus" program. The City has established more rigorous standards for such spaces.
- Greenways - landscaped pedestrian ways along the river or public streets that connect parks. The river walk is a major focus of this Plan.

Table 3.3.1: Central Area Open Space Opportunities – Acres (Parcels)

Location	Existing	Pending[1]	Buy/Build[2]	Air Rights	Total New
Riverfront	9 (7)	40 (21)	0 (1)	–	40 (22)
Lakefront	-	–	3 (1)	–	3 (1)
City Parks	13 (5)	4 (3)	10 (6)	27 (5)	41 (14)
Total	22 (12)	44 (24)	13 (8)	27 (5)	84 (37)

[1] Due to required 30' river setback or parcel already owned by city.
[2] River parcel proposed for purchase.

Source : Chicago Department of Planning and Development

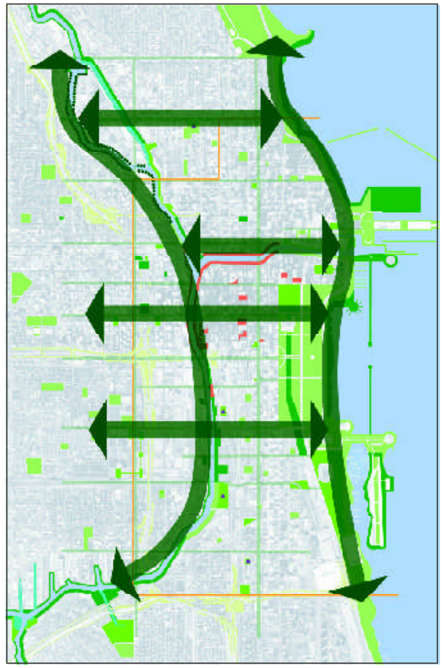
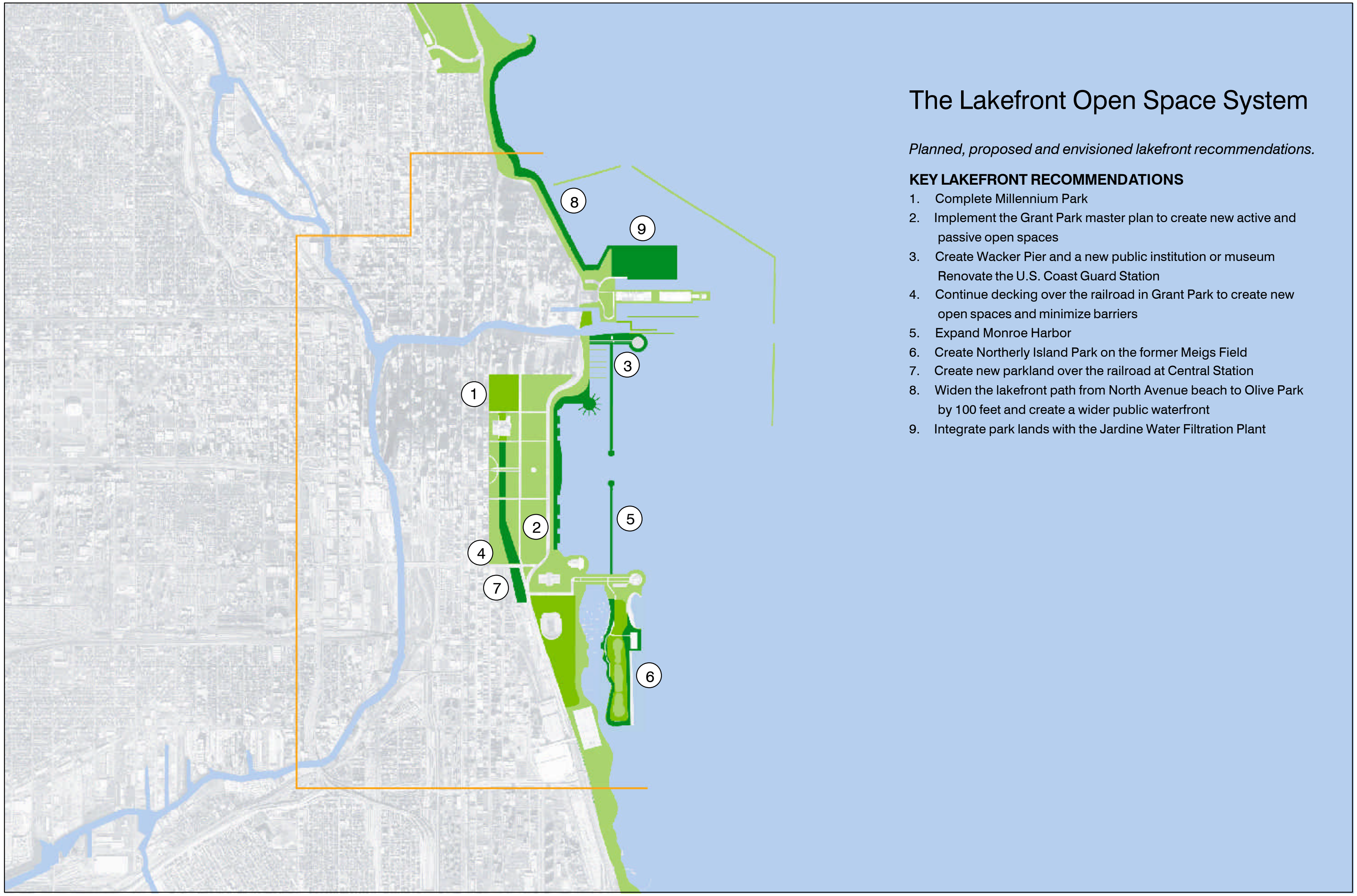


Figure 4.3.6 Open space systems in the Central Area will form a connected network for residents and visitors.

Figure 4.3.7
The lakefront open space system



The Lakefront Open Space System

Planned, proposed and envisioned lakefront recommendations.

KEY LAKEFRONT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Complete Millennium Park
2. Implement the Grant Park master plan to create new active and passive open spaces
3. Create Wacker Pier and a new public institution or museum Renovate the U.S. Coast Guard Station
4. Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers
5. Expand Monroe Harbor
6. Create Northerly Island Park on the former Meigs Field
7. Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station
8. Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a wider public waterfront
9. Integrate park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant

🟩 Existing Open Space
🟩 Planned Open Space
🟩 Open Space Vision

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

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The Lakefront

Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space

Key Lakefront Recommendations

- Complete Millennium Park
- Implement the Grant Park master plan, creating new active and passive open spaces
- Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers
- Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor including legacy projects inspired by the 1909 Plan of Chicago
    - Create Wacker Drive Pier with remodeled Coast Guard Station and a public feature or new museum
- Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station
- Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a new landscaped embankment
- Integrate expanded park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant

Chicago's spectacular lakefront was created as a result of the implementation of major projects identified at the beginning of the 20th Century in Burnham's Plan of Chicago. Today, its attractions include Grant Park and Burnham Park with its festivals and gardens, Navy Pier, beaches, boating, and bike trails. Chicago's lakefront open space system will be strengthened, with new recreational and landscaped spaces and easier access and movement.

GRANT PARK AND MILLENIUM PARK

Much of the annual visitor traffic is focused in a small area around the Petrillo Music Shell at Jackson Boulevard and the Museum Campus and Soldier Field south of Roosevelt Road. The Grant Park Master Plan calls for redistributing attractions along the lakefront, improving circulation, and creating all-season venues. At the northern end of Grant Park, Millennium Park will attract new visitors year round with the addition of the Music and Dance Theater and the music pavilion. At areas of high traffic, decks will be built over the Metra Electric tracks to create new open spaces and permit easier pedestrian access to the lakefront.

SHORELINE NORTH OF NAVY PIER

To make more room for pedestrians and cyclists and provide much-needed landscaping, the shoreline can be extended 100 feet to the east between Olive Park and Oak Street Beach. In addition to the lakefront multi-use path, this new park land can incorporate seating and a landscaped embankment.

NORTHERLY ISLAND PARK

Meigs Field will become Northerly Island Park, a 50 acre park featuring native landscaping and adaptive reuse of airport buildings. The new park will be a destination for nature-based recreation and environmental education.

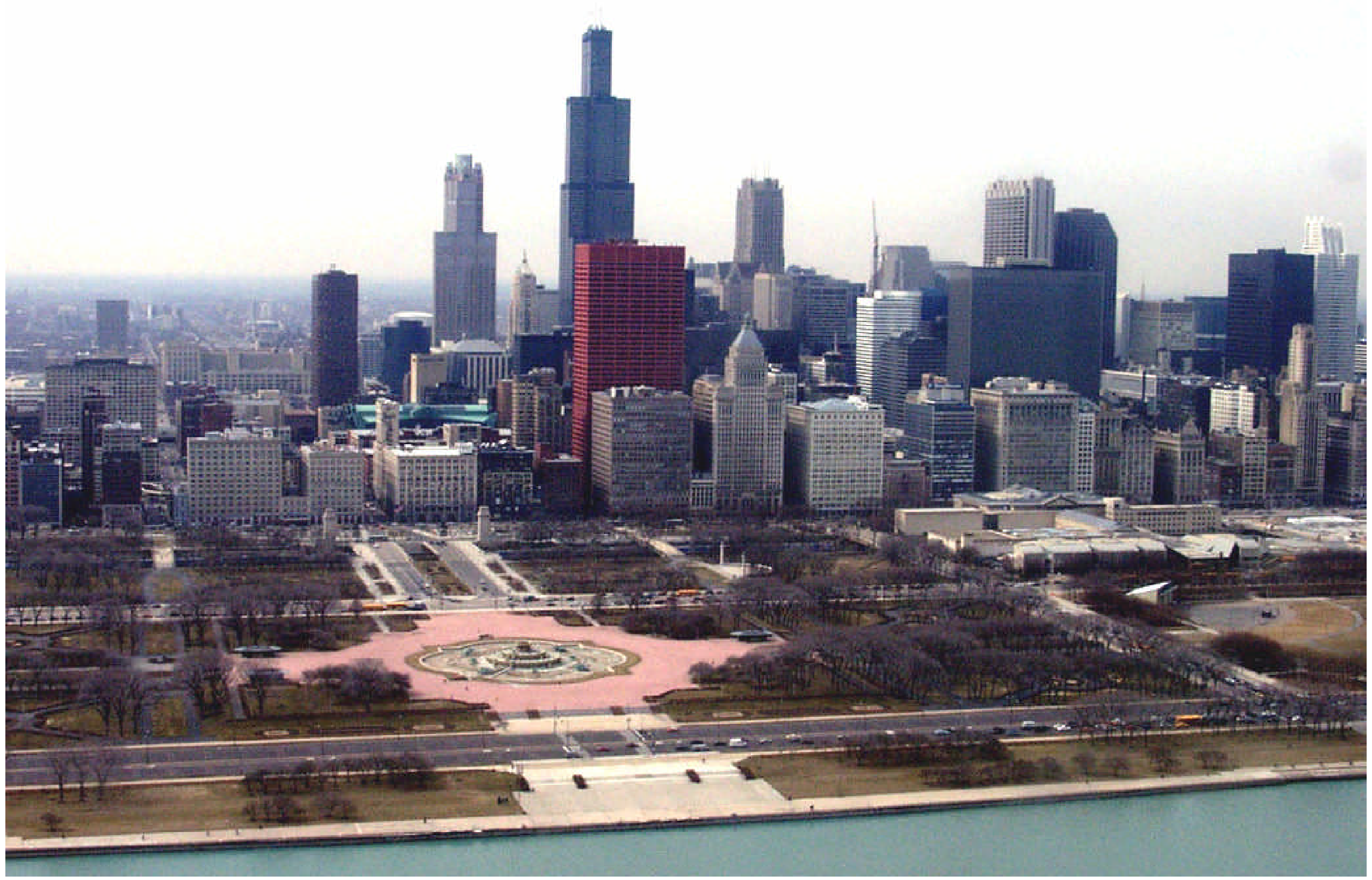

Figure 4.3.8 Implement the Grant Park Master Plan

Grant Park Master Plan

The major goals of the Grant Park Plan include:

- Expand the role of Grant Park as a regional, city-wide and local resource
- Activate the park as a whole, on a year-round basis, especially on non-event days and during the winter
- Protect and enhance the unique landscape of the park
- Preserve and interpret the park's historic character while accommodating its evolving uses, including the needs of new residential developments on its periphery
- Integrate Grant Park into the Lakefront open space system
- Develop short and long-range guidelines for land-use, management, maintenance, transportation, roadway design and park development
- Integrate the planning process for Grant Park with the plans for other facilities of the Central Lakefront
- Develop Butler Field as sports fields
- Introduce a performance venue at Hutchinson Field
- Extend pathways over the railroad rights of way

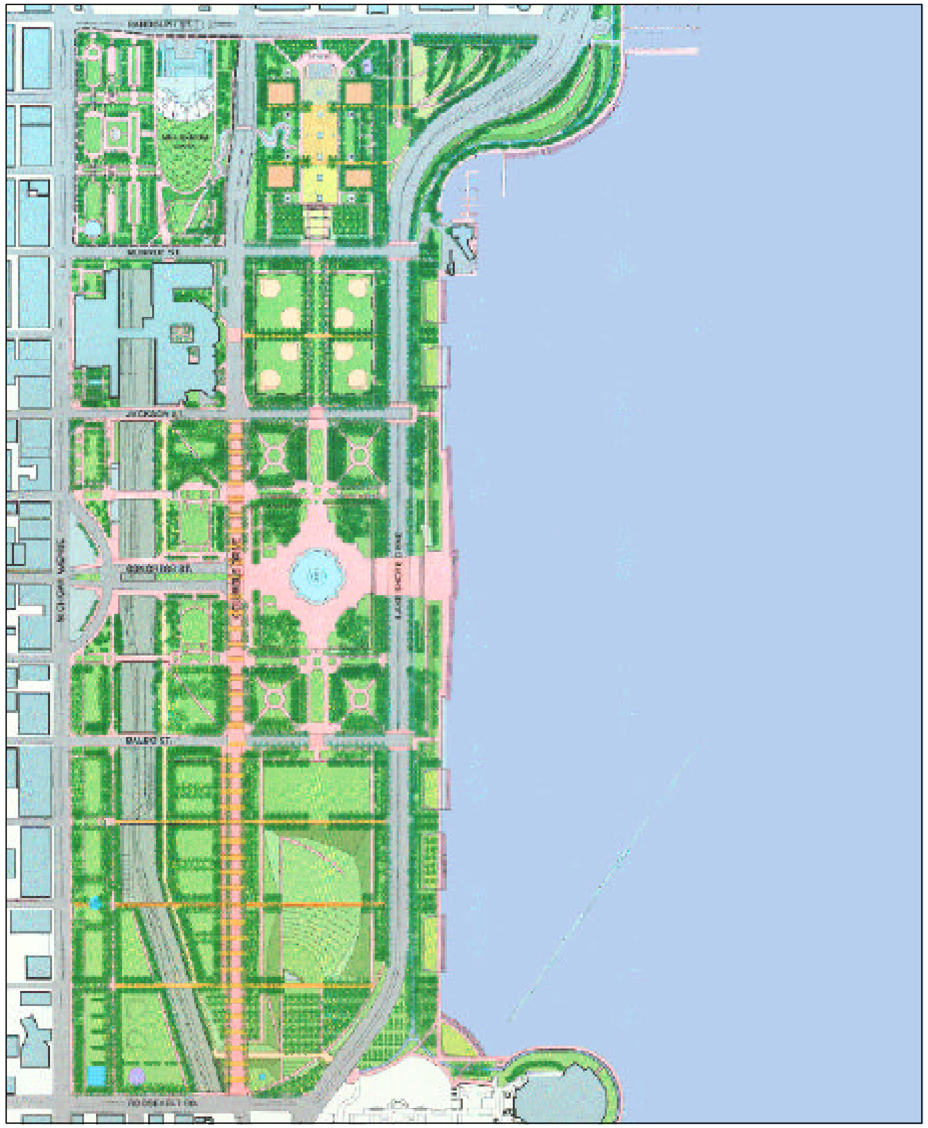

Figure 4.3.9 The Grant Park Master Plan

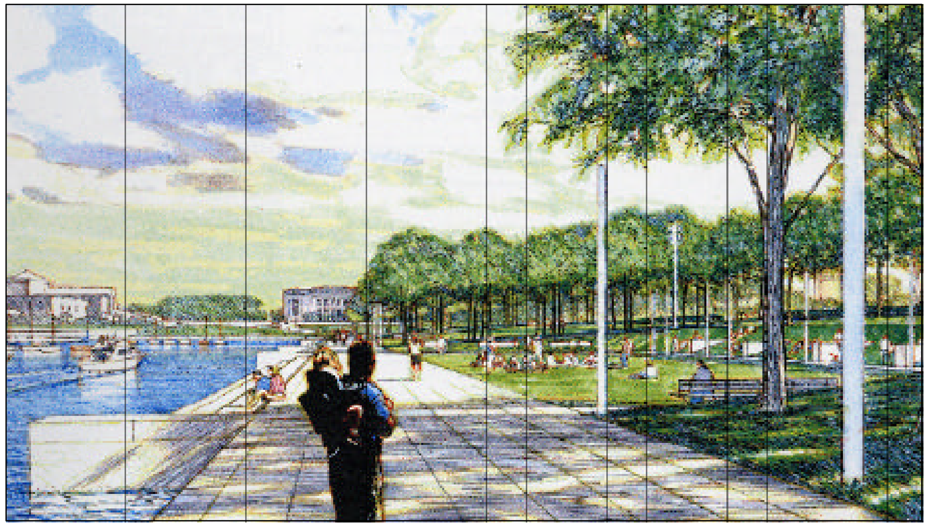

Figure 4.3.10 Queen's Landing

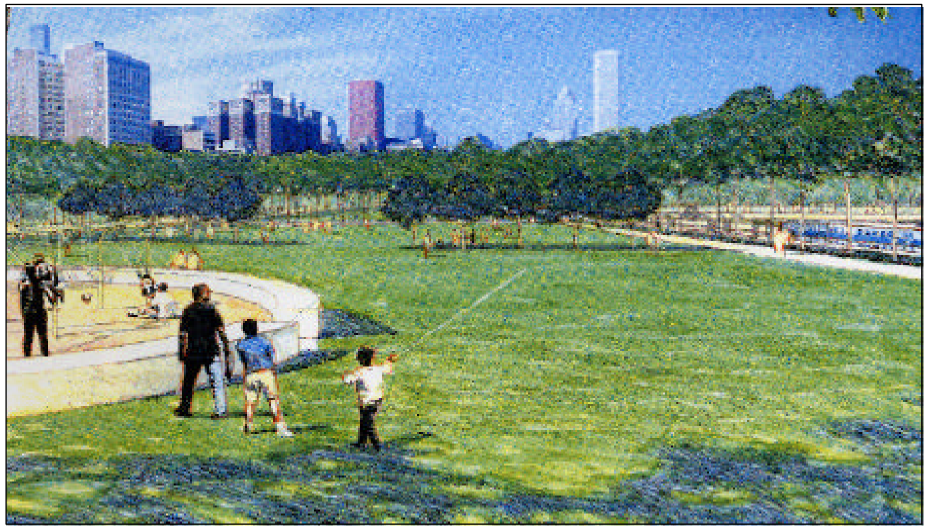

Figure 4.3.11 Neighborhood Park Area

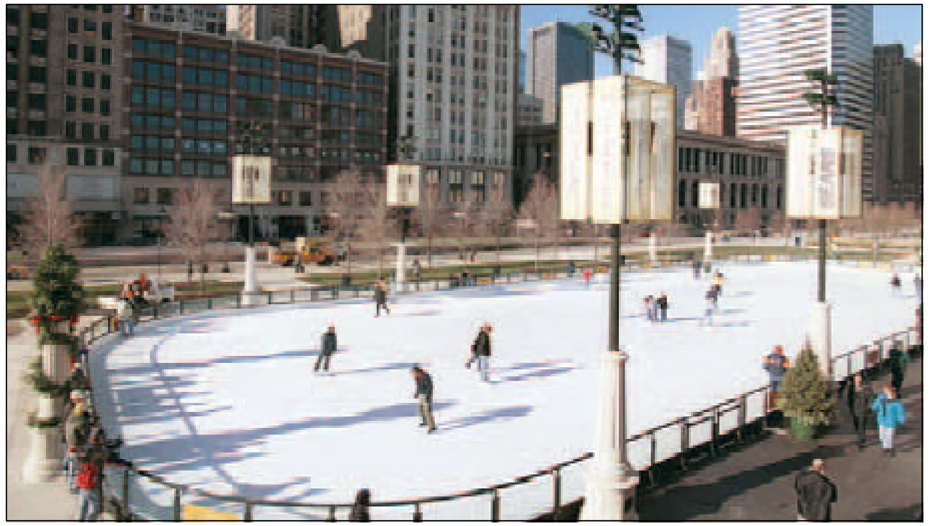

Figure 4.3.12 The recently completed McCormick Tribune Ice Rink at Millenium Park

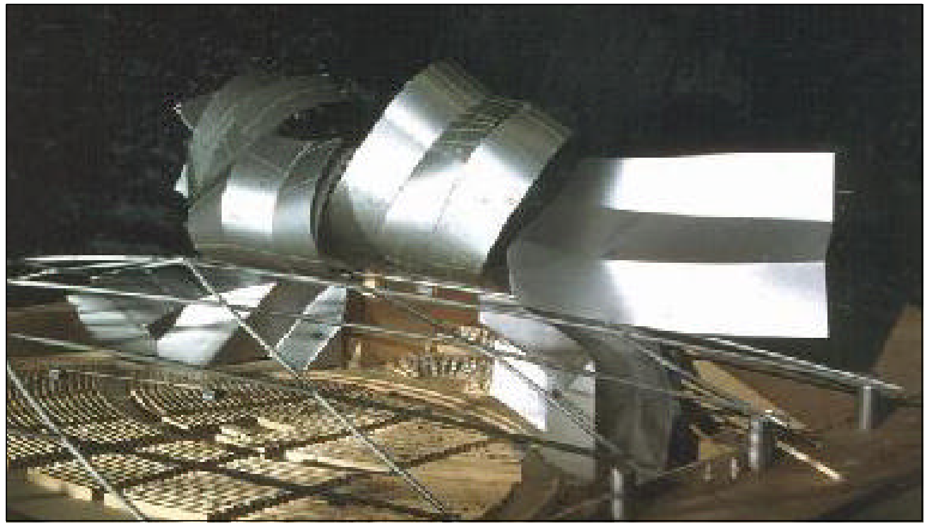

Figure 4.3.13 Outdoor music pavilion and bandshell at Millenium Park

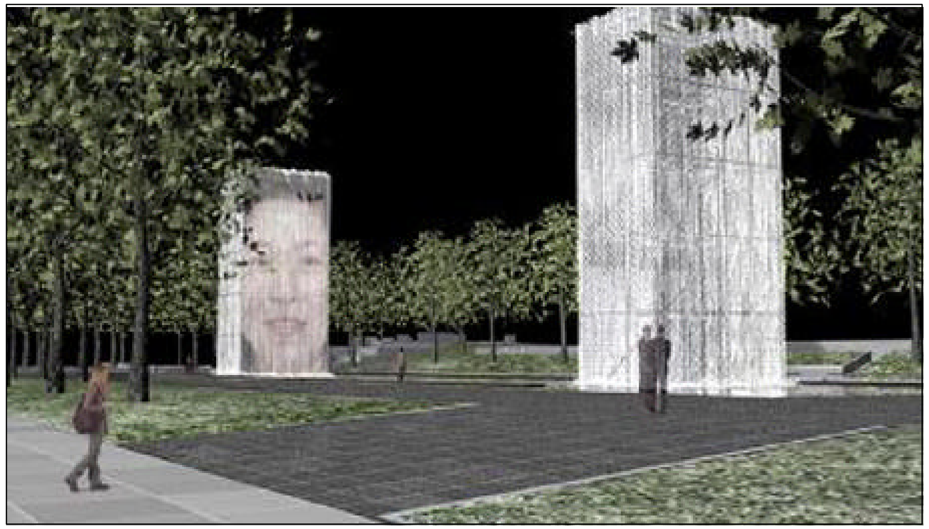

Figure 4.3.14 Public fountains at Millenium Park

Figure 4.3.15 Michigan Avenue gardens at Millenium Park

Millennium Park

First conceived in 1997, Millennium Park will become one of the finest recreational and cultural spaces of any city in the world. The new park has added 16 acres to Grant Park by constructing a land bridge over the Metra Railroad tracks. The design, financed through public-private partnership, includes an outdoor ice rink, an award-winning band shell designed by architect Frank Gehry, a 1500-seat Music and Dance Theater, and extensive public sculptures, gardens, green spaces and promenades. Its underground parking structure will include over 2000 parking stalls for cars and a 400-space heated indoor bicycle parking facility complete with lockers, showers and bike repair.

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Lakefront Expansion North of Olive Park

Expand the lakefront path between Olive Park and North Avenue beaches by 100 feet. Introduce landscaping to create new parkland and expanded pedestrian and bicycle ways between the city and the lakefront.

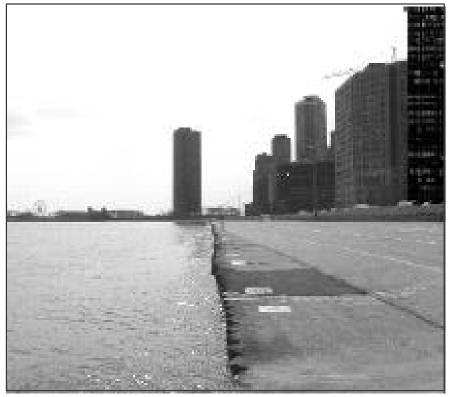

Figure 4.3.16 The lakefront path today

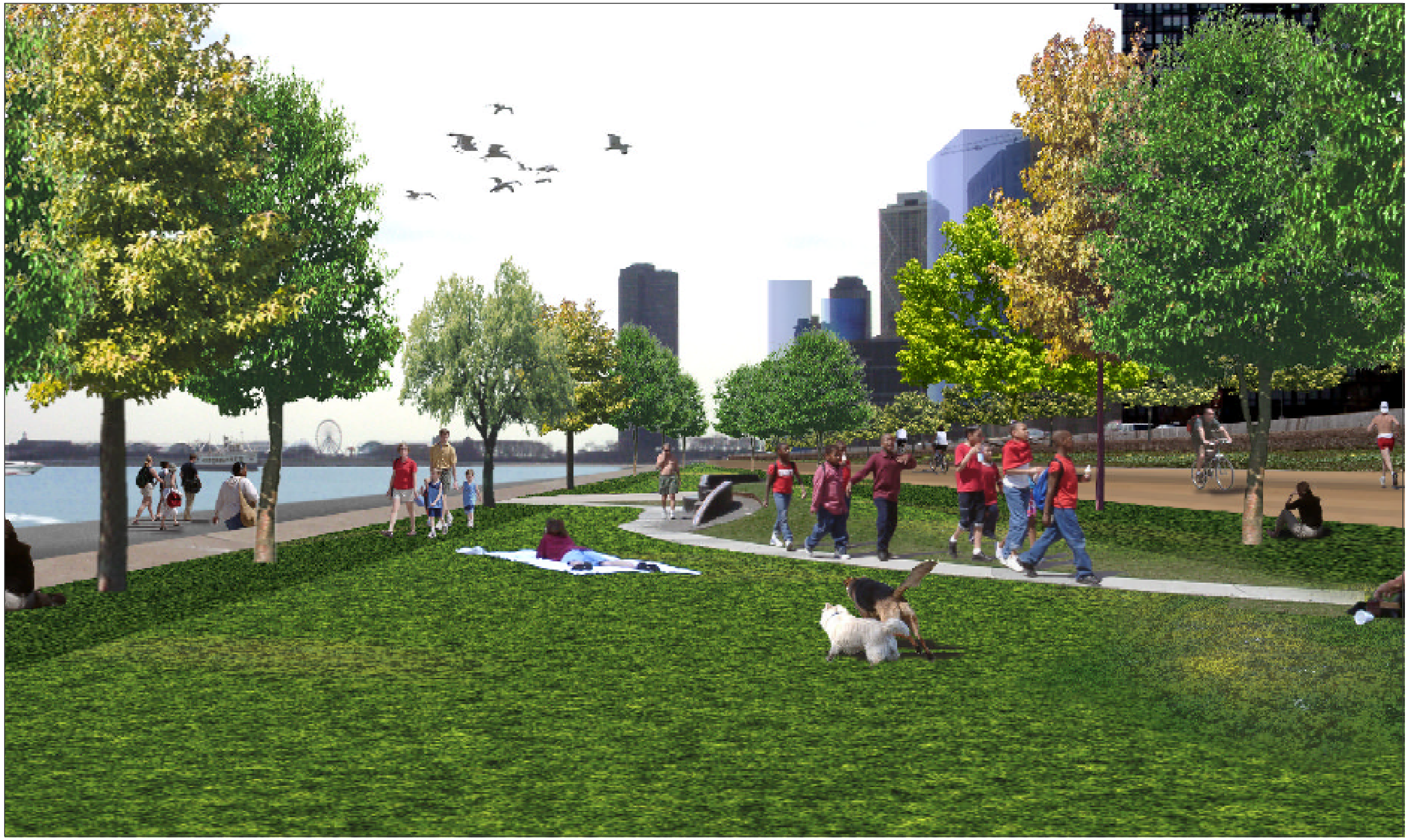

Figure 4.3.17 The lakefront path north of Olive Park in 2020

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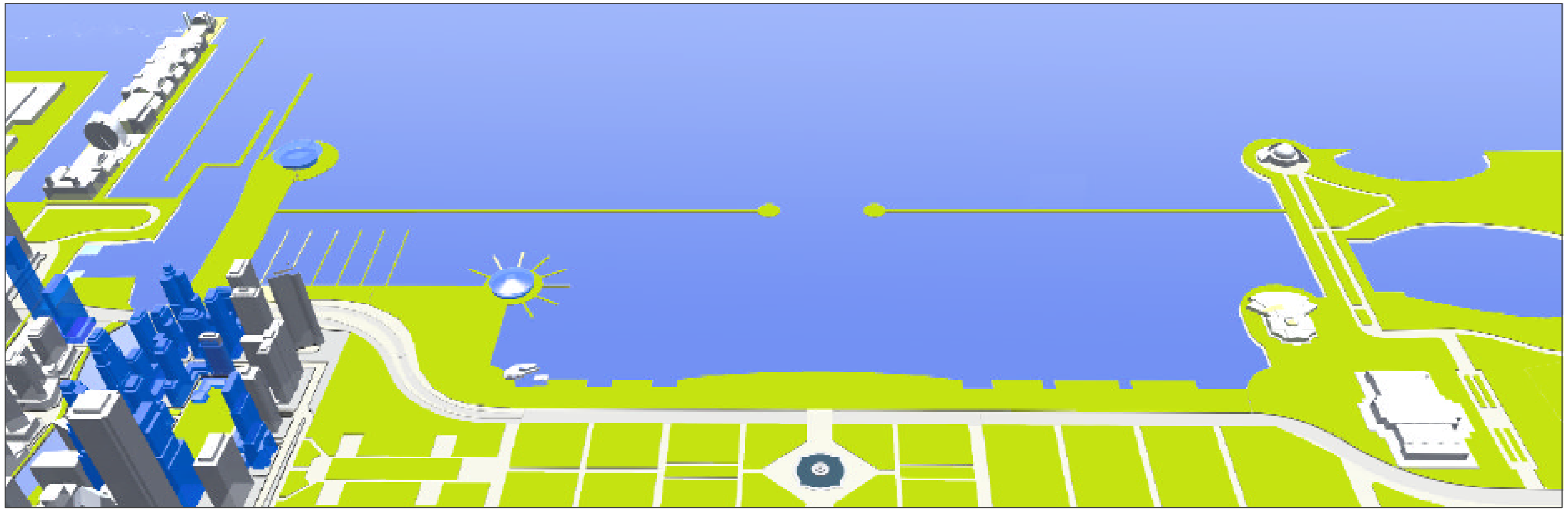


Figure 4.3.18 Concept of Wacker Pier and Monroe Harbor

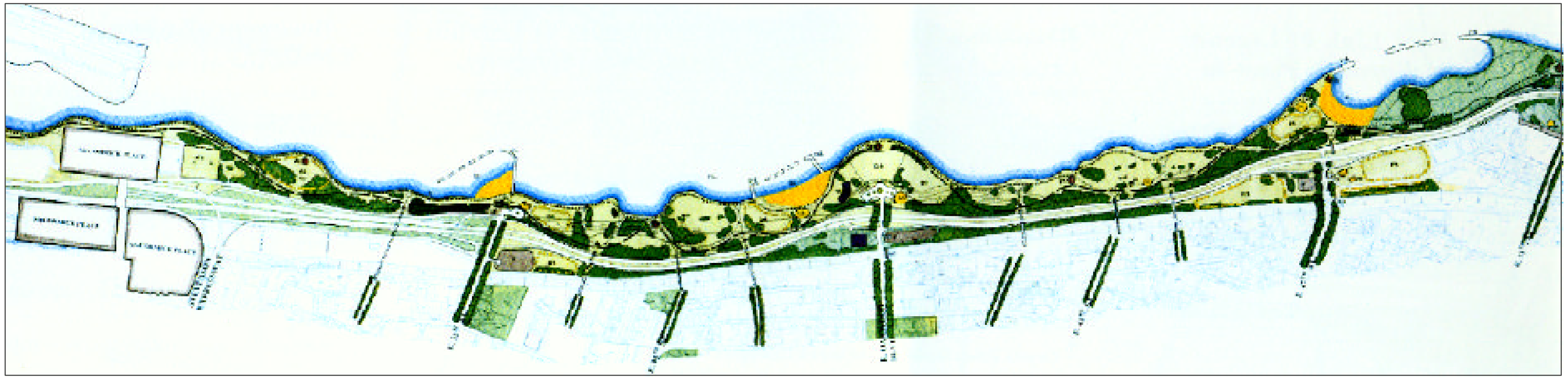


Figure 4.3.19 Burnham Park Framework Plan

Monroe Street Harbor

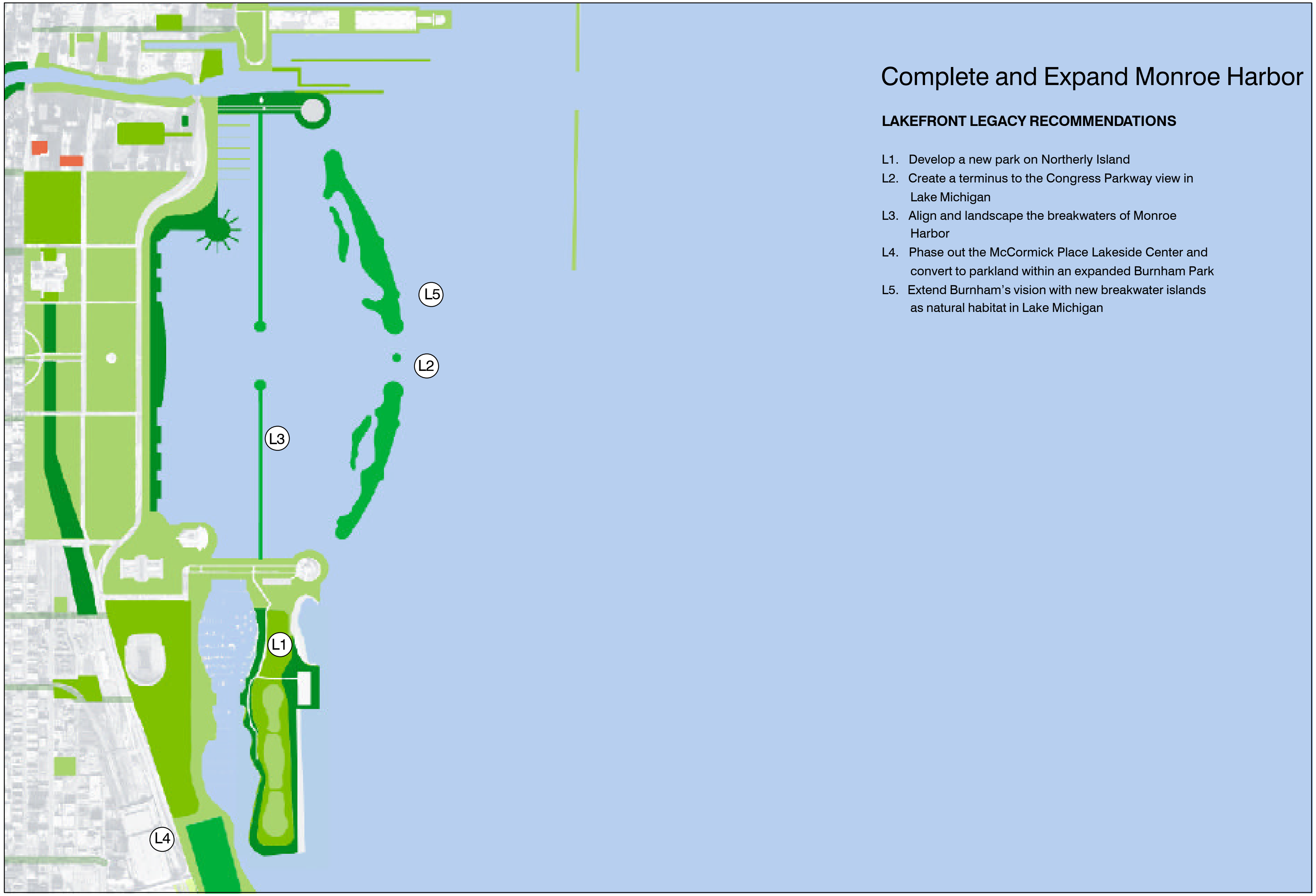
Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor, create more boat slips and a new Yacht-Clubhouse. Explore widening and landscaping the breakwaters and the realignment of the southern breakwater.

Wacker Pier

Widen and landscape the existing DuSable Marina wall to create a new Wacker Pier and extended civic space, that brings people out to the lake. Renovate the existing Coast Guard Station and create a new public cultural institution.

Burnham Park Improvements

Implement the Burnham Park Framework with increased open space, improved landscaping, new beaches, active open spaces, fieldhouses, new roadway access and new pedestrian bridges across the railroad tracks and Lake Shore Drive. Locate Soldier Field Parking in structure and gain open space. Phase out the McCormick Place Lakefront Center and expand Burnham Park.



Complete and Expand Monroe Harbor

LAKEFRONT LEGACY RECOMMENDATIONS

L1. Develop a new park on Northerly Island
L2. Create a terminus to the Congress Parkway view in Lake Michigan
L3. Align and landscape the breakwaters of Monroe Harbor
L4. Phase out the McCormick Place Lakeside Center and convert to parkland within an expanded Burnham Park
L5. Extend Burnham's vision with new breakwater islands as natural habitat in Lake Michigan

Figure 4.3.20
Chicago's Lakefront Legacy

🟩 Open Space - Existing
🟩 Open Space - Planned
🟩 Open Space - Vision
🟦 Open Space - Legacy
🟥 Plazas

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Complete and Expand Monroe Harbor

Maintain the legacy of new ideas for Chicago's Lakefront first envisioned in Burnham and Bennett's 1909 Plan of Chicago

The grandest visions of Chicago's past leaders will be maintained through a commitment to exploring the feasibility of a new set of "legacy" projects for the lakefront.

The Plan proposes shoreline islands that create wave protection and also a new destination off-shore. The islands would offer extensive natural habitat environments for birds as well as parklands for visitors. The sweeping islands would form a larger Monroe Harbor, similar to the original Burnham concept.

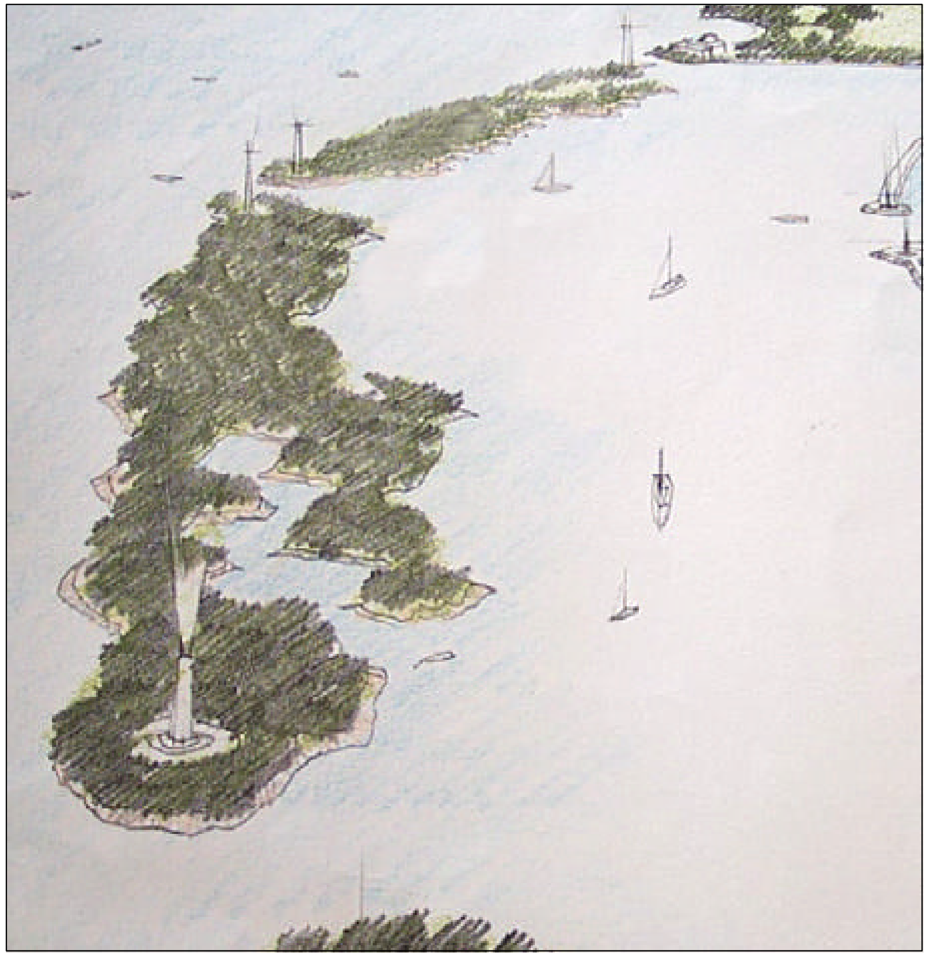


Figure 4.3.21
Shoreline islands form an outer breakwater as well as a natural habitat

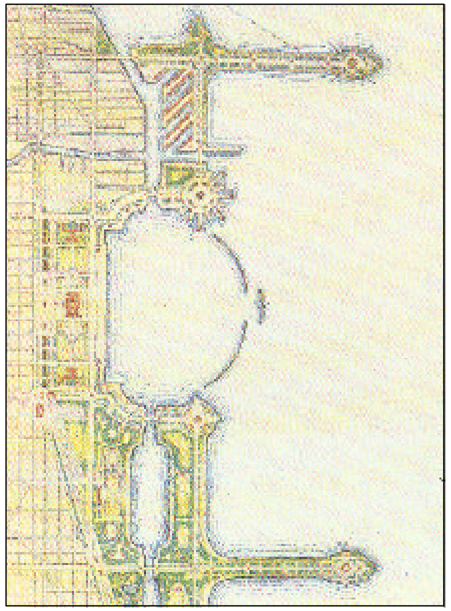
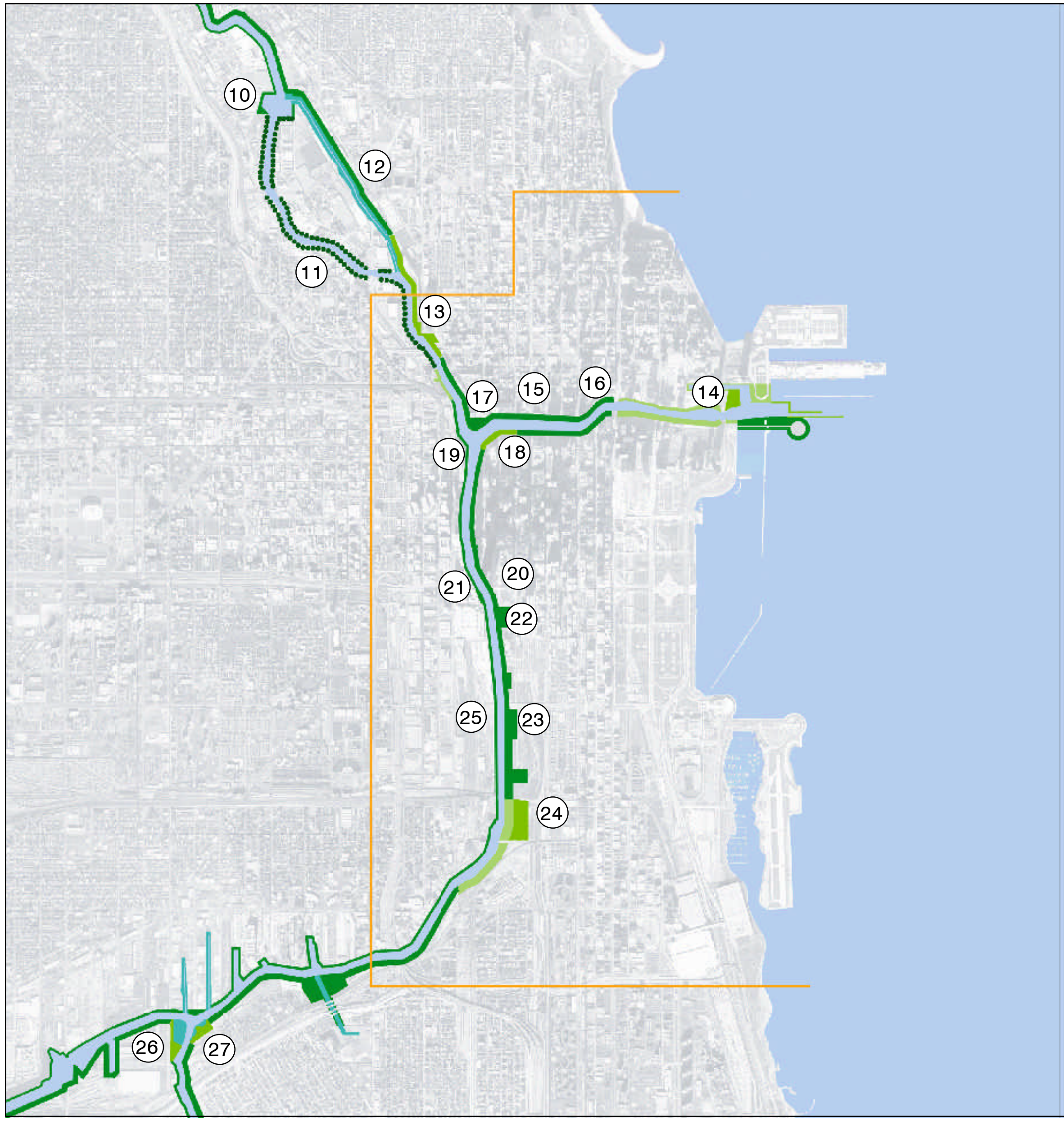


Figure 4.3.22
The central lakefront as envisioned by the Plan of Chicago (1909)

Figure 4.3.23
The riverfront will become a major new public amenity on a par with the lakefront. A continuous riverwalk will extend from outlying neighborhoods through the Central Area to Lake Michigan



The Riverfront Open Space System

Planned, proposed and envisioned riverfront recommendations.

KEY CHICAGO RIVER RECOMMENDATIONS

NEAR NORTH
10. Add a new boat house, pedestrian bridge and river edge landscape at the North Avenue turning basin
11. Enhance landscaping along the west side of Goose Island
12. Create a natural habitat and recreation opportunities along the east side of Goose Island
13. Ensure continuous river access through the Montgomery Ward site to connect with parks at Hobbie and Erie Streets.
14. Create Du Sable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River
15. Create an active riverwalk with commercial uses along the north side of the Main Branch from the lake to Wolf Point.
16. Create new public space at the Sun Times-Trump Tower Chicago site.
17. Create a new public park at Wolf Point.

THE EXPANDED LOOP
18. Create a continuous pedestrian riverwalk along Wacker Drive on the Main Branch from Lake Street to the lakefront as part of the Wacker Drive improvements.
19. Develop a riverfront plaza on the west bank of the South Branch between Randolph and Lake Streets.
20. Develop a public riverfront plaza at 310 South Wacker Drive.
21. Create new riverfront open space at the Old Main Post Office along with its redevelopment.

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH
22. Create a new riverfront park at Franklin Point.
23. Create a continuous public river park on the east side of the Chicago River to provide public access from Harrison Street to Ping Tom Park.
24. Expand Ping Tom Park.
25. Achieve a continuous open space corridor along the west side of the Chicago River.
26. Implement Origins Park plan at the South Turning Basin.
27. Expand Origins Park to serve the Bridgeport neighborhood.

🟩 Existing Open Space
🟩 Planned Open Space
🟦 Vision Open Space
🟨 Vision for Wetlands along the River
●● Landscaped Riverbanks

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

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The Chicago Riverfront

Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system

Key Riverfront Recommendations

- Create a connected greenway along the river, with continuous multi-use paths along at least one side of the river
- Increase public access to the river through the creation of overlooks and public parks
- Restore and protect native landscaping and natural habitats along the river, particularly fish and bird habitat, where appropriate
- Develop the river as a recreational amenity, attracting tourists and enhancing Chicago's image as a desirable place to live, work and visit
- Encourage economic development compatible with the river as an environmental and recreational amenity
- Good stormwater management in the Central Area will help to clean river and lake water

The riverfront will become a major new public amenity comparable to the lakefront. A continuous riverwalk will extend from outlying neighborhoods through the Central Area to Lake Michigan. Restoration of the banks will enhance habitat and water quality.

The Chicago River presents the single largest opportunity to enhance open space throughout the Central Area. The river is within a five-minute walk of most of the Loop and surrounding districts, and should provide a unique experience of nature in the city.

Completing the riverwalk will require coordination of public and private interests, overcoming physical constraints and significant capital investment. All river edge improvements will be designed with a view to integration into a connected, publicly accessible system.

City of Chicago ordinance currently requires a 30-foot setback from the water's edge for all new riverfront development. This should be seen as a minimum dimension with greater depth encouraged. New Riverfront projects should be reviewed as Planned Developments by the Department of Planning and Development. The City has published guidelines for river design and works closely with developers to ensure that riverside improvements meet certain standards for landscaping, lighting and accessibility.

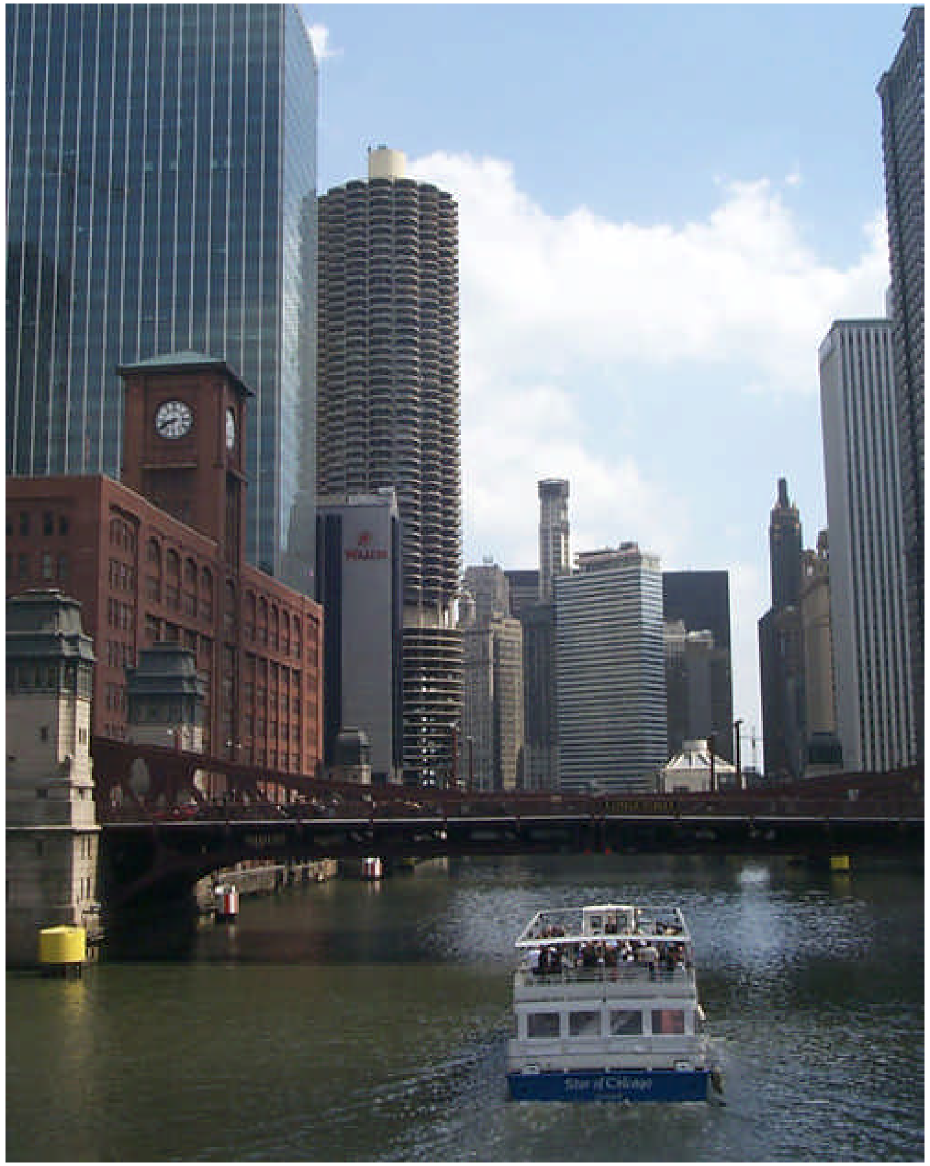

Figure 4.3.24 The Main Branch of the Chicago River will be enhanced by a continuous riverwalk and underbridge connections

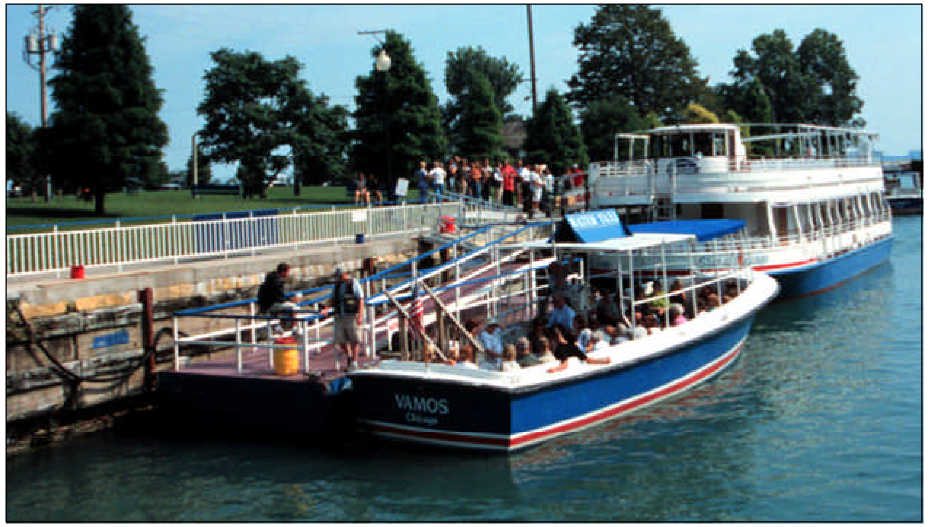

Figure 4.3.25 Water taxis on the Chicago River

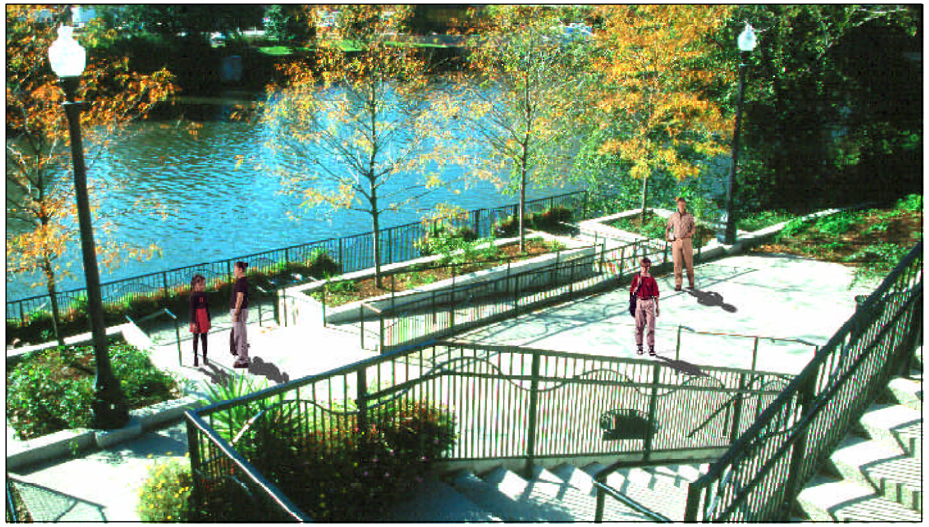

Figure 4.3.26 Erie Terrace Park in River North

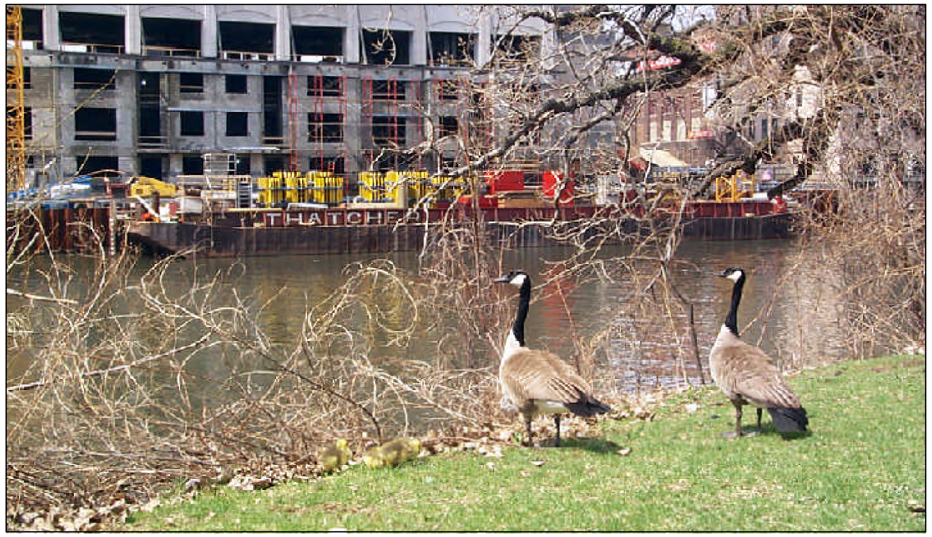

Figure 4.3.27 Natural habitat along the Chicago River

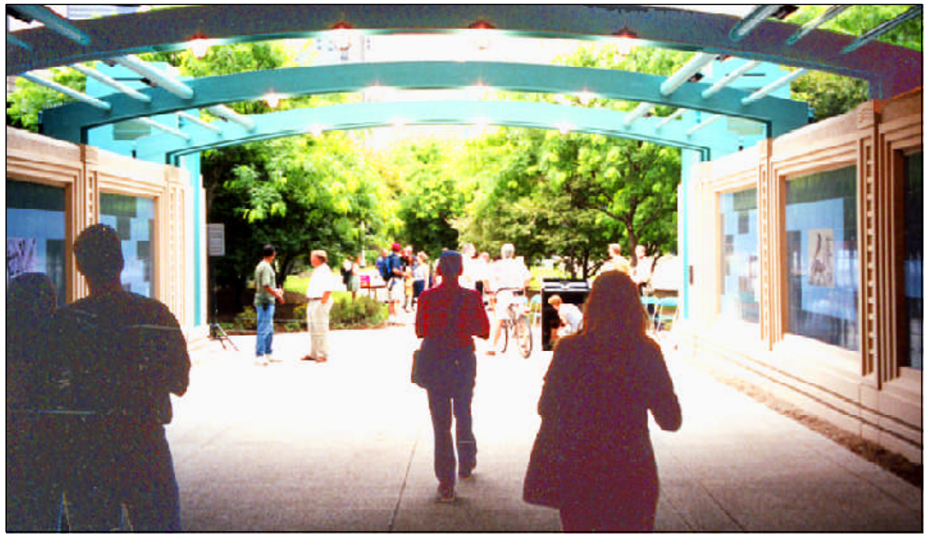

Figure 4.3.28 The Riverwalk Gateway under Lake Shore Drive

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MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE DOWNTOWN RIVERWALK WILL BE COMPLETED IN THE NEAR FUTURE

A continuous river path will be located on at least one side of the river throughout the Central Area. This path is envisioned as a multi-use trail suitable for cycling, walking, and other uses. The path will offer underbridge connections such as those at Lake Shore Drive and Columbus Drive on the Main Branch. These connections make a continuous landscaped path possible, extending from Michigan Avenue to Lake Michigan, with a link to the lakefront bike path at Lake Shore Drive.

On the north bank of the Main Branch, this path will extend west to a multi-level river promenade at the redeveloped Sun-Times site, which will also include access to a transit stop at the new Carroll Avenue busway. A continuous street level path at Marina City, IBM and Reid Murdoch will provide pedestrian access. The path will continue west and provide access to the Merchandise Mart and Wolf Point. Wolf Point affords striking views of the river corridor and provides an opportunity for a significant riverside improvement.

On the south bank, the walkway will continue west along Wacker Drive to Lake Street. The portion between Michigan Avenue and Lake Street is envisioned as a grand promenade featuring landscaping, seating, cafes, performance areas and concessions.

The river walkways are a key element in proposed downtown pedestrian improvements, designed to facilitate movement of commuters between the West Loop rail stations and their workplaces. Eventually, a continuous street-level riverside walkway will extend along the west side of the South Branch between Van Buren and Lake streets, with connections to Union Station and the Ogilvie Transportation Center. This walkway will make it possible for pedestrians to walk along the river from the train stations to the lakefront by crossing to the Wacker Drive walkway at Lake Street. The walkways will also provide stops for the enhanced water taxi system proposed for the Central Area.

THE NORTH AND SOUTH BRANCHES OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR RIVER ENHANCEMENTS

Several large vacant sites remain along the north and south branches of the river. These sites offer opportunities for regional parks, natural areas and walkways. The redevelopment of the Montgomery Ward headquarters site will provide a continuous riverwalk from a park near Erie Street to a park near Hobbie Street. The eventual development of two vacant parcels will extend the riverwalk north to Halsted Street.

Another opportunity for enhanced trails and parks is provided on the east side of the South Branch between Roosevelt Road and Ping Tom Park at 18th Street as part of the South River Development Corridor.

At the eastern edge of Goose Island, the North Branch Canal can be designed to accommodate natural vegetation along its edges with an open channel for vessels. This would provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and a new recreational and environmental resource for residents.

Riverfront Projects

NEAR NORTH

- A new boat house, pedestrian bridge, and river edge landscape improvements at the North Avenue turning basin
- A new recreational and environmental resource along the east side of Goose Island on the North Branch Canal
- Continuous river access through the Montgomery Ward site from Hobbie to Erie streets, with parks at Hobbie and Erie
- Creation of Du Sable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River
- An active riverwalk with commercial uses along the north side of the Main Branch from the lake to the Sun-Times / Trump Tower Chicago site and points west
- A new public space at the Sun-Times-Trump Tower Chicago site
- Potentially a new public park at Wolf Point

THE EXPANDED LOOP

- A continuous pedestrian riverwalk along Wacker Drive on the Main Branch from Lake Street to the lakefront
- A public riverfront plaza on the west bank from Randolph to Lake
- Public riverside open space at the old main post office

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

- A new riverside park at Franklin Point
- A continuous public river park on the east side of the Chicago River offering continuous public access from Harrison Street to Ping Tom Park
- Expansion of Ping Tom Park
- Possible continuous open space corridor along the west side of the Chicago River
- Creation of a neighborhood riverfront park in Pilsen
- Extension of the river park system to the southwest into the heart of the City

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River Parks and the Riverwalk

The River should be seen as a valuable open space resource as well as a viable transportation corridor for pedestrians, cyclists and water taxis.

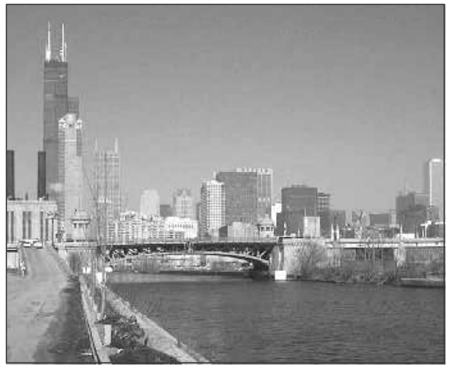

Figure 4.3.29 The South Branch today

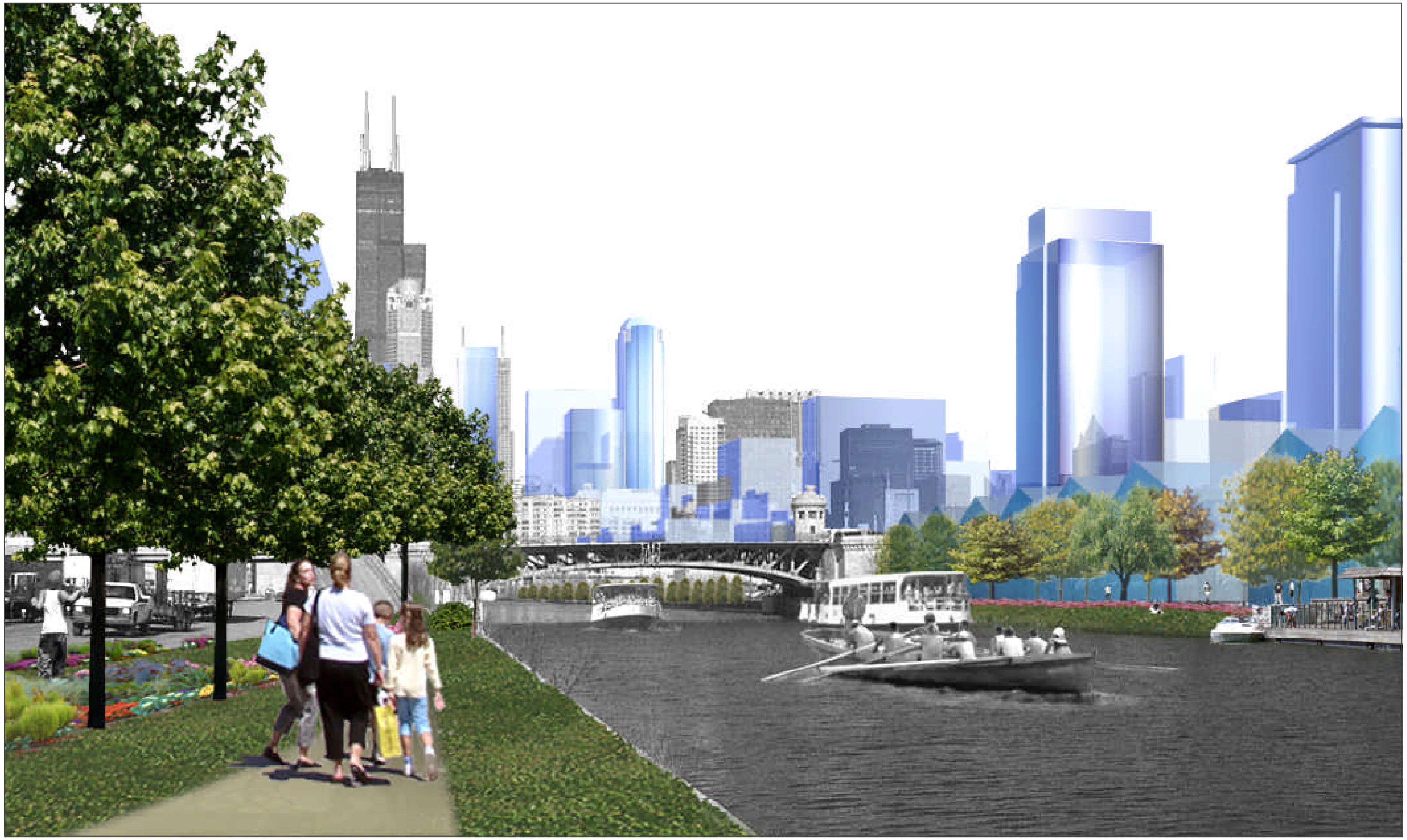

Figure 4.3.30 The South Branch in 2020

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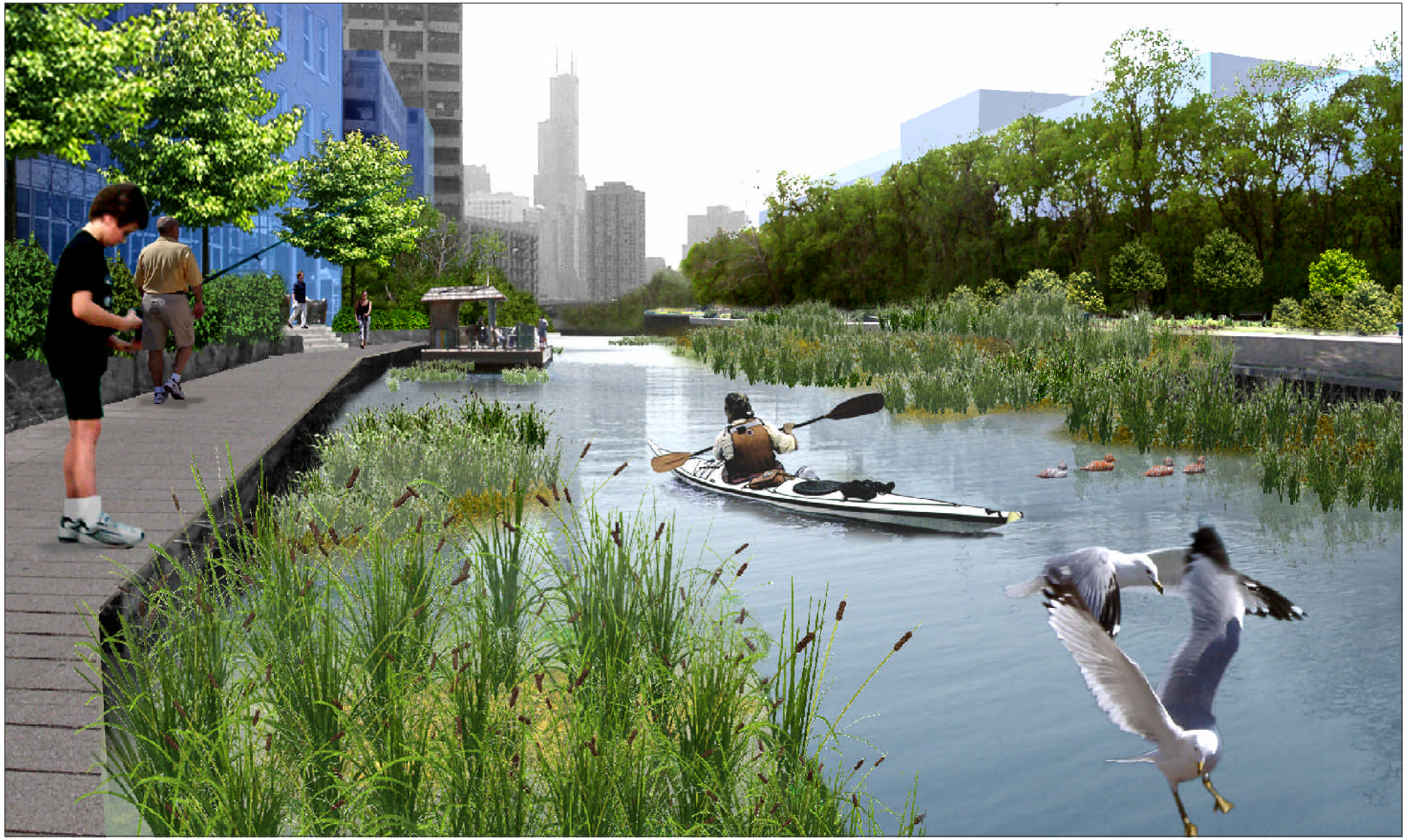


Figure 4.3.31 The North Branch Canal in 2020

North Branch Canal River Edge Improvements

The North Branch Canal on the east side of Goose Island will be transformed, serving as natural habitat and providing a variety of ecological and recreation opportunities.

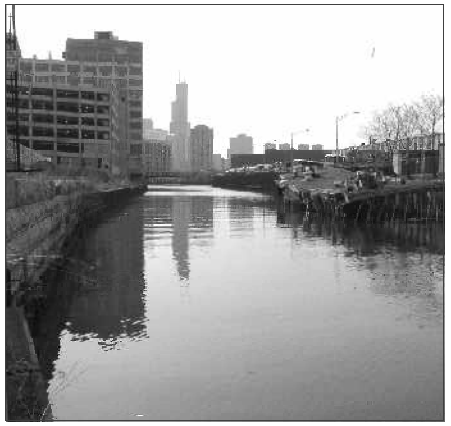
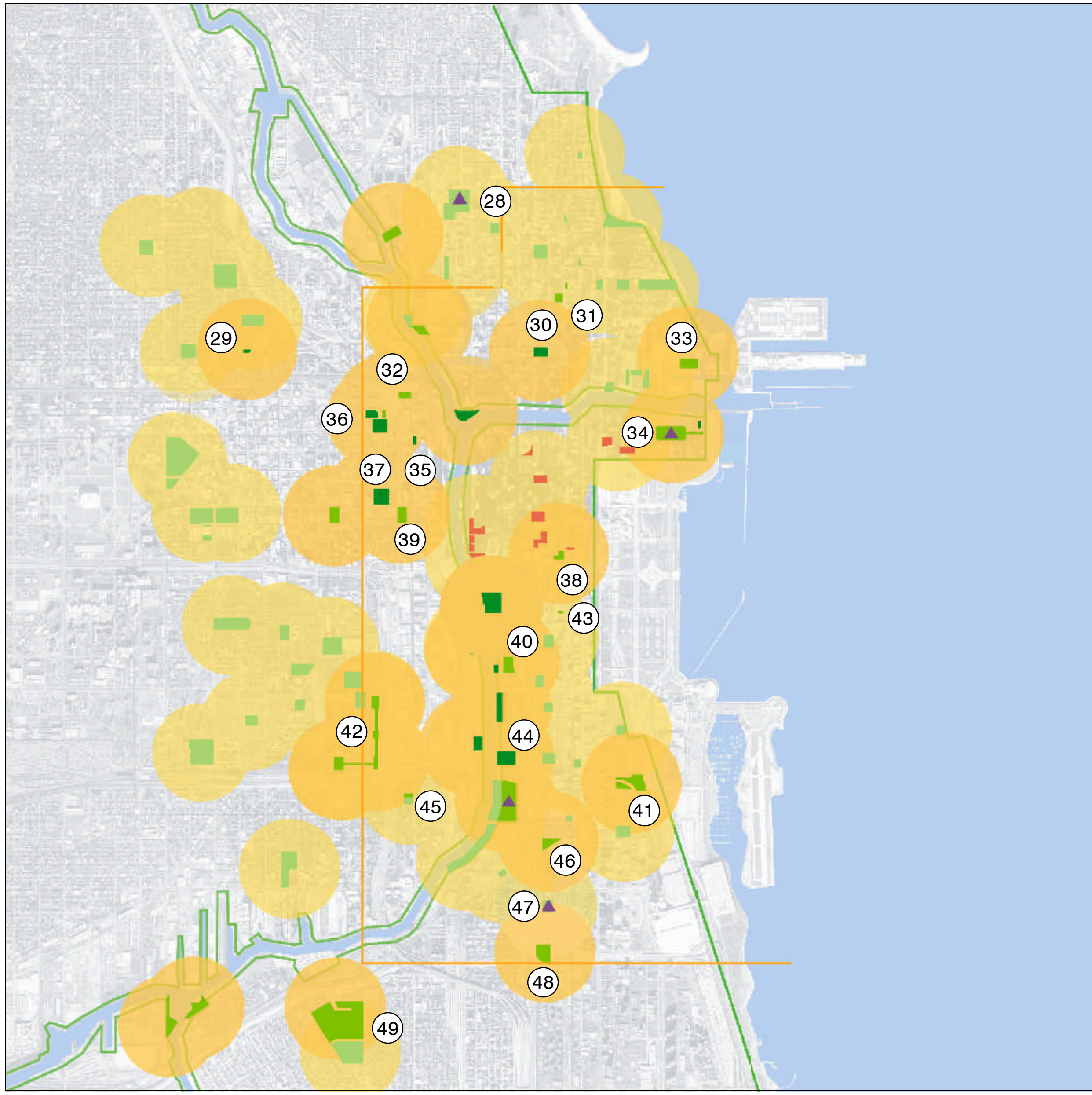


Figure 4.3.32 The North Branch Canal today

Figure 4.3.33
The Central Area will provide a range of new parks and plazas, serving a variety of needs.



Neighborhood Parks and Plazas

Planned, proposed and envisioned parks and plaza recommendations.

PARK AND PLAZA RECOMMENDATIONS

NEAR NORTH

28. Implement plans for Walter Payton Academy Campus Park.
29. Develop new park in the Near Northwest Neighborhood as new residential development occurs.
30. Develop a new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets.
31. Create a new park at the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and State Street.
32. Create Kinzie Park at Kinzie and DesPlaines Streets.
33. Develop Kraft Park to serve the Streeterville Neighborhood.

THE EXPANDED LOOP

34. Create a new park to serve the Lakeshore East neighborhood.
35. Develop Jefferson Plaza at Lake Street and Jefferson Street.
36. Develop new parks over the Hubbard Street Tunnel.
37. Create a new park over the Kennedy Expressway between Monroe and Madison Streets to connect the West Loop with Greek Town.
38. Reconfigure Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren Streets.
39. Create Park at Adams and Des Plaines Streets.

THE SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

40. Complete park at Taylor and Wells Streets
41. Create new park at 16th and Indiana.
42. Complete University Village neighborhood parks
43. Complete the Jones High School Campus Park
44. Create new riverfront parks as new neighborhoods develop on the east bank of the South Branch of the Chicago River
45. Expand the Jefferson Playlot in Pilsen at 17th and Jefferson Streets
46. Improve park at the South Loop Annex School site
47. Complete park at 24th and Federal Streets
48. Create a new park at Stearns Quarry in Bridgeport

🟩 Existing Open Space
🟩 Planned Open Space
🟩 Open Space Vision
🟥 Plaza
▲ Fieldhouse
● Five-Minute-Walk from New Park
● Five-Minute-Walk from Existing Park

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

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Parks and Plazas

Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks and plazas to support the growing population

Key Park and Plaza Recommendations

- Expand regional parks to better serve Central Area residents
- Create new neighborhood parks
- Ensure that plazas contribute to the pedestrian realm with landscaping and seating, and are located appropriately

Regional Parks

Regional parks include Ping Tom Park as well as Seward Park just outside the Central Area. Ping Tom Park at 18th Street and the Chicago River is being expanded to include a fieldhouse, baseball diamonds, a soccer field, and river edge connections to the north and south.

In addition, a 5.3 acre park and an adjacent elementary school are planned as part of the Lakeshore East development. The park will include indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, with fieldhouse services provided in the school building.

Neighborhood Parks

These parks are intended primarily for nearby residents and workers. New neighborhood parks are being pursued at the following locations:

- Kinzie Street and Jefferson Street.
- Kraft Building site at Grand Avenue and Peshtigo Court. A two-acre park will be built above an underground parking lot, helping to ease both open space and parking shortages in the area.
- U.S. Postal Service site, Ontario Street and Dearborn Street. A 0.8-acre park serving the River North community has been proposed for this location. River North currently has no interior parks despite substantial population growth.
- A park over the Kennedy Expressway at Monroe Street that will connect the West Loop to Greektown and be a civic gateway.
- A West Loop Park at Desplaines Avenue and Adams Street. A 1.2-acre park has been proposed for this site, currently used as a parking lot. A grade school and numerous apartment buildings are in the vicinity. The West Loop has been proposed for high-density office development and will require adequate open space for workers on their lunch breaks.
- The southeast corner of Taylor Street and Wells Street. This 3-acre site is being reserved in anticipation of residential development in the vicinity.
- 24th Street and Federal Street.

Plazas

Plazas serve the Central Area's workers. Although open to the public, in many cases they are actually privately owned and maintained. Many plazas in the Central Area were built under the bonus provisions of the Chicago zoning code, which permit developers to build larger buildings in return for providing public amenities. To ensure future plazas and other amenities are of high quality, the zoning code was recently amended to include design standards for character, size, landscaping, access, location, orientation, seating and lighting. Plazas are prohibited in areas where they would disrupt the continuity of the historic street wall such as sections of Michigan Avenue, LaSalle Street and Wabash Avenue.

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Fort Dearborn Park

Develop a new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets after the phasing out and the relocation of the post office operations. This park will serve the growing residential population of River North, which has minimal public open space.

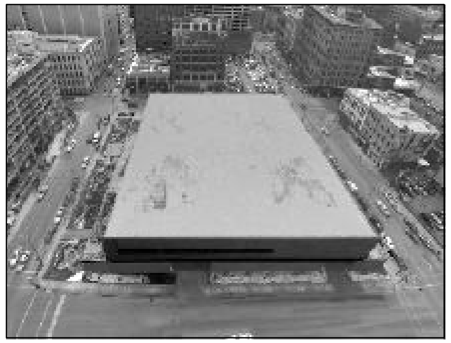

Figure 4.3.34 Fort Dearborn Post Office today

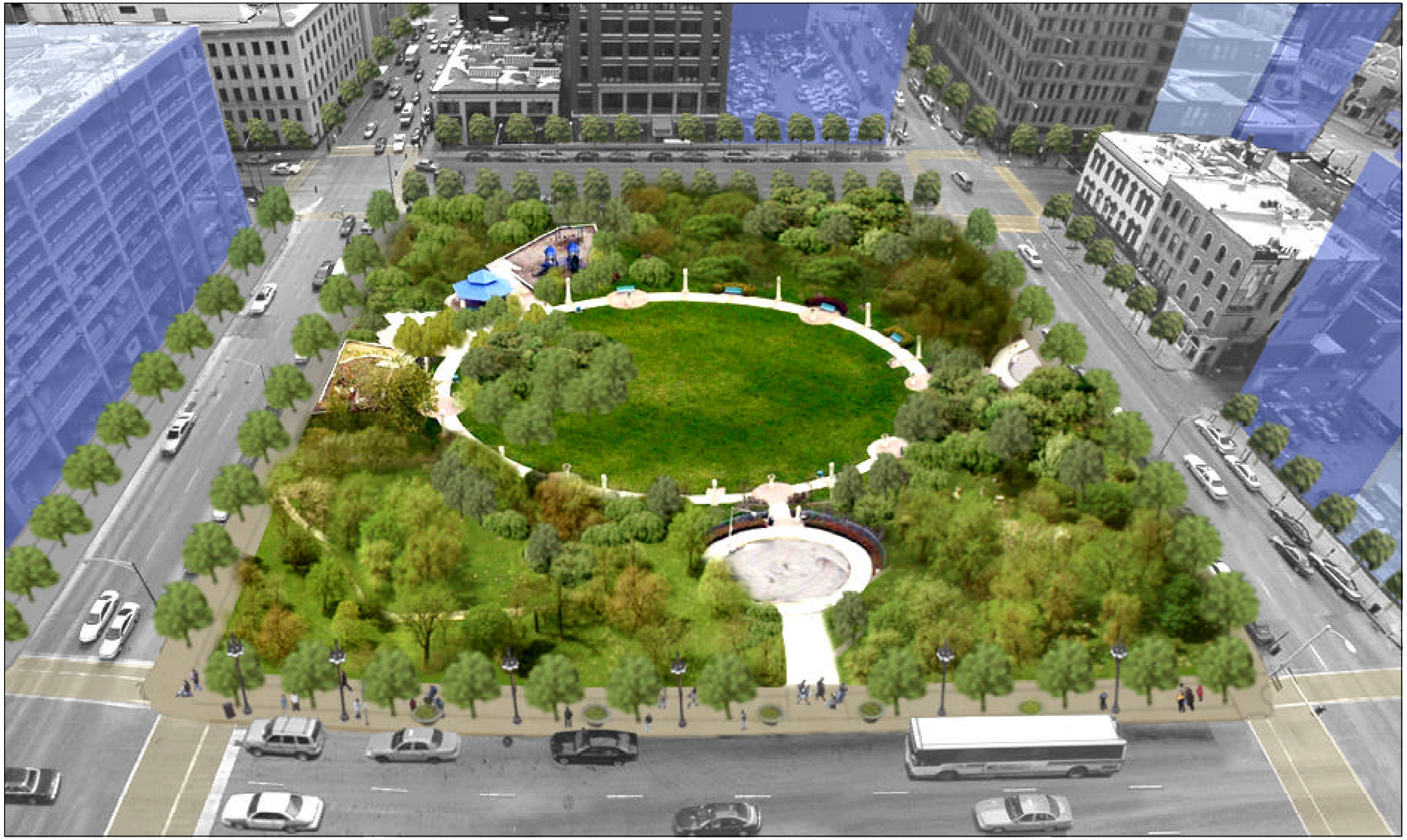

Figure 4.3.35 Fort Dearborn Park in 2020

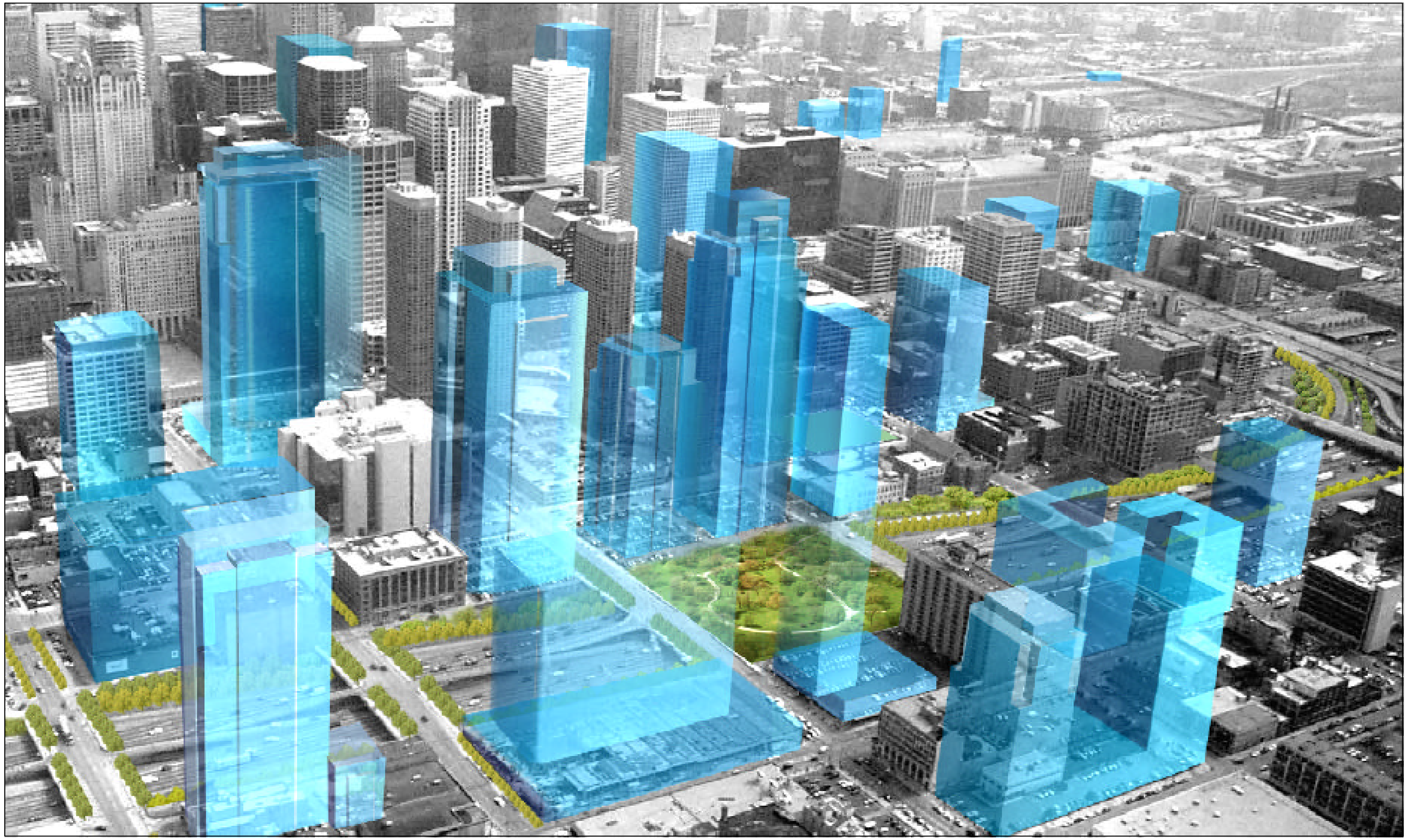

Figure 4.3.36 I-94 and Monroe Street in 2020

A new park over the Kennedy Expressway at Monroe Street

The new park will connect the West Loop with Greek Town and create needed open space without challenging development sites. This one block park should be seen as part of a "green gateway" to the Central Area. The automobile passage underneath should also be designed as an attractive civic gateway. It can set a precedent for a new generation of parks and urban greening that improve air quality and soften the edges of the expressways.

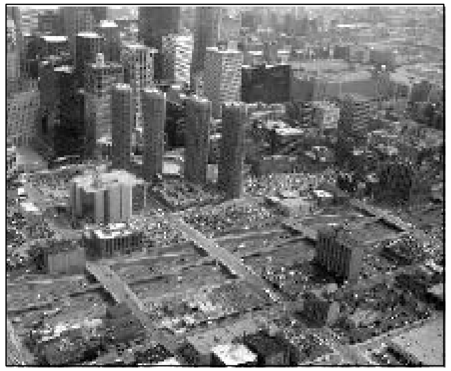

Figure 4.3.37 I-94 and Monroe Street today

Ping Tom Park

An expanded Ping Tom park will include a new fieldhouse, athletic fields and green space adjacent to the Chicago River.

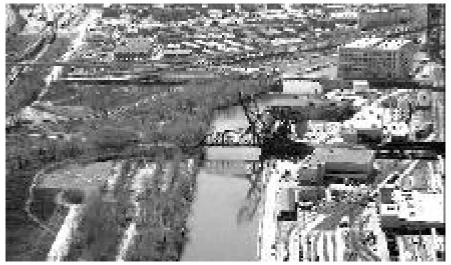

Figure 4.3.38 The South River corridor today.

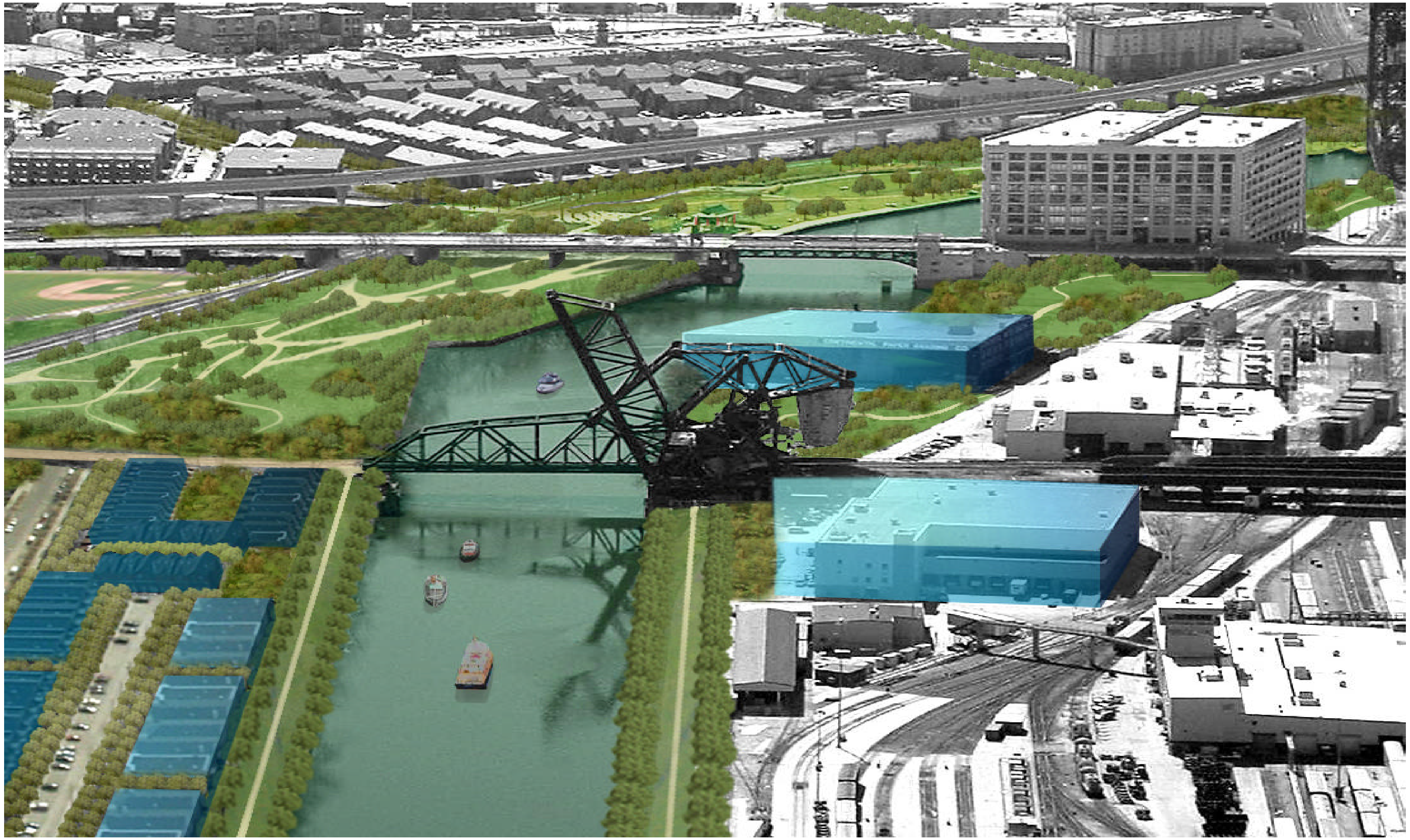

Figure 4.3.39 The South River corridor in 2020 will connect the New South River Neighborhoods to the Loop via a continuous riverwalk.

Park and Plaza Projects

NEAR NORTH

- Walter Payton Academy campus park
- New parks in the Near Northwest neighborhood as new residential development occurs
- Kinzie Park at Kinzie and Desplaines streets
- Jefferson Plaza at Jefferson and Lake Street
- A new park at the Fort Dearborn post office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets
- A new park at the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and State Street
- Kraft Park to serve the Streeterville Neighborhood

THE EXPANDED LOOP

- A new park to serve the Lakeshore East Neighborhood
- A new Plaza at 310 South Wacker Drive
- Reconfigure Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren streets
- Create new parks over the Kennedy expressway at Monroe Street and over Hubbard's Cave
- Connect the Near West Side and the University of Chicago at Chicago (UIC) with new parkland over the Eisenhower Expressway

THE SOUTH LOOP

- Complete a new park at Taylor Street and Wells Street
- Complete the Jones High School campus park

THE NEAR SOUTH

- Create neighborhood parks on the west side of the Chicago River
- Complete the planned park at 24th and Federal Streets
- Expand the Jefferson playlot in Pilsen
- Expand Ping Tom park to include athletic fields and a fieldhouse
- Complete Mark Twain Park at 15th Place and Indiana Avenue
- Develop a new park at the South Loop Annex school site

PARK PROJECTS NEAR THE CENTRAL AREA

- Look to the underutilized waterfront in Pilsen and Bridgeport for future park opportunities
- Create a new park at Stearn's Quarry in Bridgeport
- Complete neighborhood parks with completion of UIC's south campus expansion

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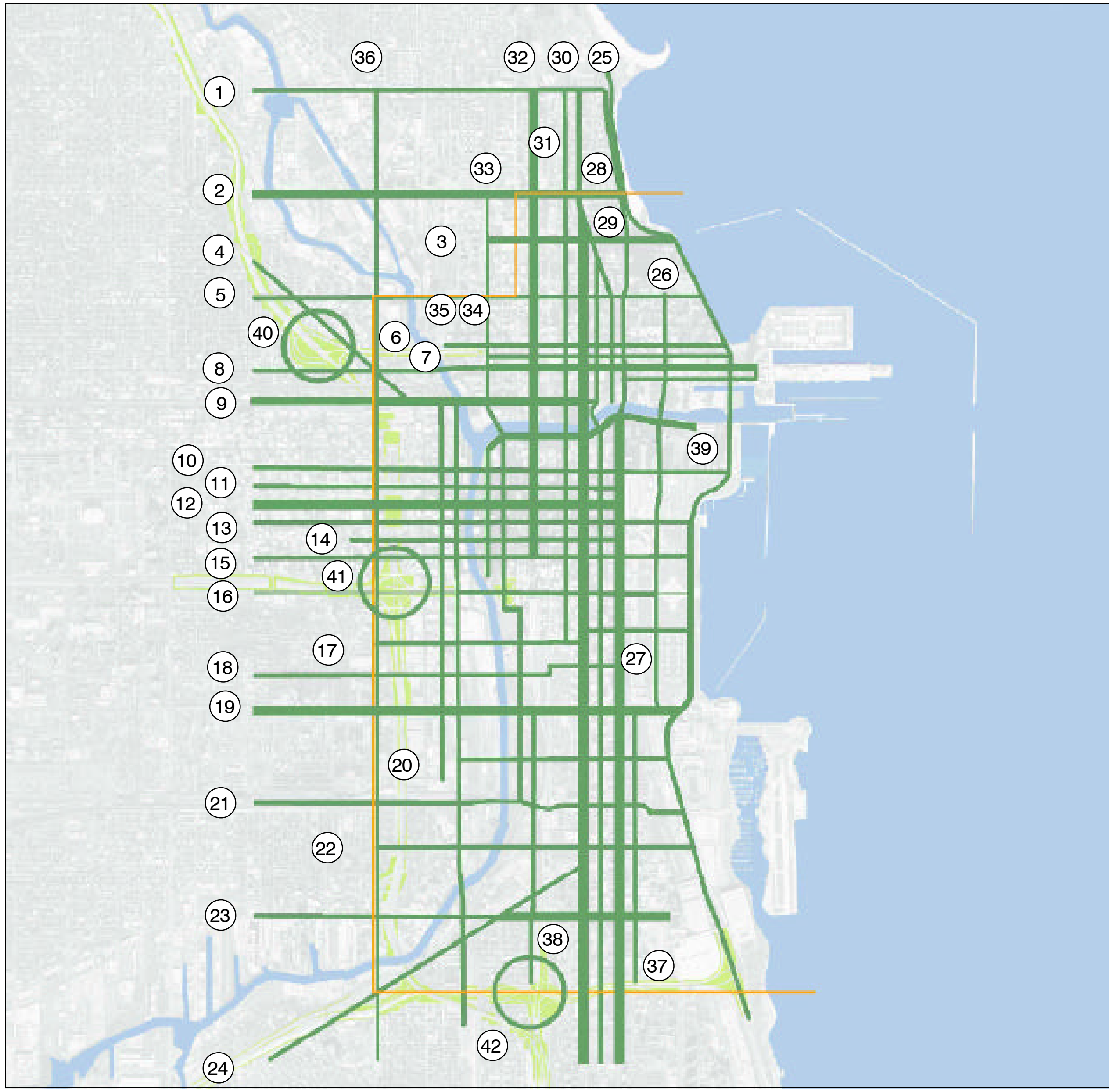
Figure 4.3.40
Green streets and infrastructure



Green Streets and Infrastructure

Key Green Streets and Infrastructure Recommendations

GREEN STREETS

1 North Avenue
2 Division Street
3 Oak Street
4 Milwaukee Avenue
5 Chicago Avenue
6 Ohio Street
7 Ontario Street
8 Grand Avenue and Illinois Street at Navy Pier
9 Kinzie Street
10 Randolph Street
11 Washington Street
12 Madison Street
13 Monroe Street
14 Adams Street
15 Jackson Boulevard
16 Congress Parkway
17 Polk Street - Balbo Street
18 Taylor Street
19 Roosevelt Road
20 14th Street
21 St. Charles Airline
22 18th Street
23 Cermak Road
24 Archer Avenue
25 Lake Shore Drive
26 Columbus Drive
27 Michigan Avenue
28 Rush Street
29 Wabash Avenue
30 State Street
31 Dearborn Street
32 LaSalle Street
33 Franklin Street
34 Canal Street
35 Clinton Street
36 Halsted Street
37 Indiana Avenue
38 Wells - Wentworth Avenue
39 Wacker Drive

GREEN GATEWAYS

40 Ohio St-Kennedy Expressway intersection
41 Dan Ryan and Eisenhower Expressway intersections
42 Dan Ryan and Stevenson Expressways intersection

🟩 Major ‘green’ streets
🟩 Other ‘green’ streets
○ Green gateways

Green Streets and Infrastructure

Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards.

Key Recommendations

- Landscape improvements along expressway corridors and intersections throughout the Central Area
- Create a "green" intersection at the Ohio Street feeder from the Kennedy Expressway, and at other gateway locations such as Chicago Avenue and Larrabee Street, Roosevelt Road and Clark Street, and Cermak Road and the Chicago River
- Expanded sidewalks and landscaping on existing bridges over the Kennedy Expressway connecting the West Loop with Greektown
- Create a strong gateway at the intersection of the Eisenhower and Dan Ryan expressways
- Create parks along the CTA's Green Line in the Near South
- Create the St. Charles Airline Greenway to connect neighborhoods and the Chicago River to the Lakefront adjacent to 16th Street

Trees and plants soften the city's sharp edges and are an important supplement to dedicated open space. They can also play a key role in reducing the urban heat island effect. In recent years, the city has installed new trees, landscaped medians and planters as part of a comprehensive loop streetscaping project. On some of these streets, such as State Street and Michigan Avenue, local business orginizations have taken over their maintenance. These improvements are created through streetscape associations funded by local businesses and building owners. The City will continue to work with the business community to expand its streetscaping program along key arteries throughout the Central Area.

The St. Charles Airline, an east-west elevated rail right-of-way adjacent to 16th Street, presents an opportunity for greening of the Central Area. It offers a potential pedestrian and bicycle connection between the lakefront and the neighborhoods to the west. Even if the current structure were to be leveled, the St. Charles could be reconfigured as a recreational greenway with bike trails and pedestrian paths to connect the lakefront to Douglas Park and the boulevard system. It may also be retained as part of the transit system.

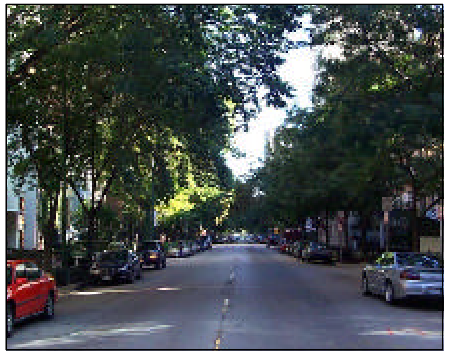


Figure 4.3.41 North Dearborn Parkway
An example of a well landscaped street

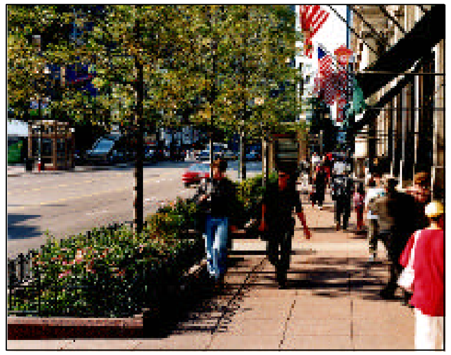


Figure 4.3.42 State Street
One of the Loop's great retail streets, State Street is softened by plants and shaded by trees.

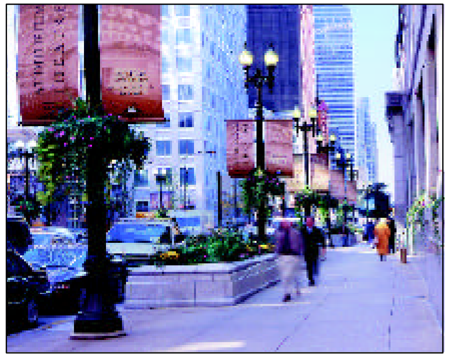


Figure 4.3.43 Randolph Street
Streetscaping in the Theatre District

Figure 4.3.44 Rush Street
Landscaping on Rush Street

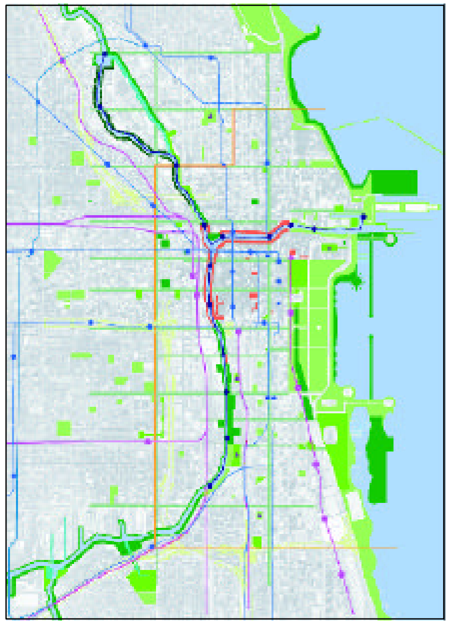


Figure 4.3.45 Green streets and transit provide a 'green' infrastructure that connects the Central Area without a car.

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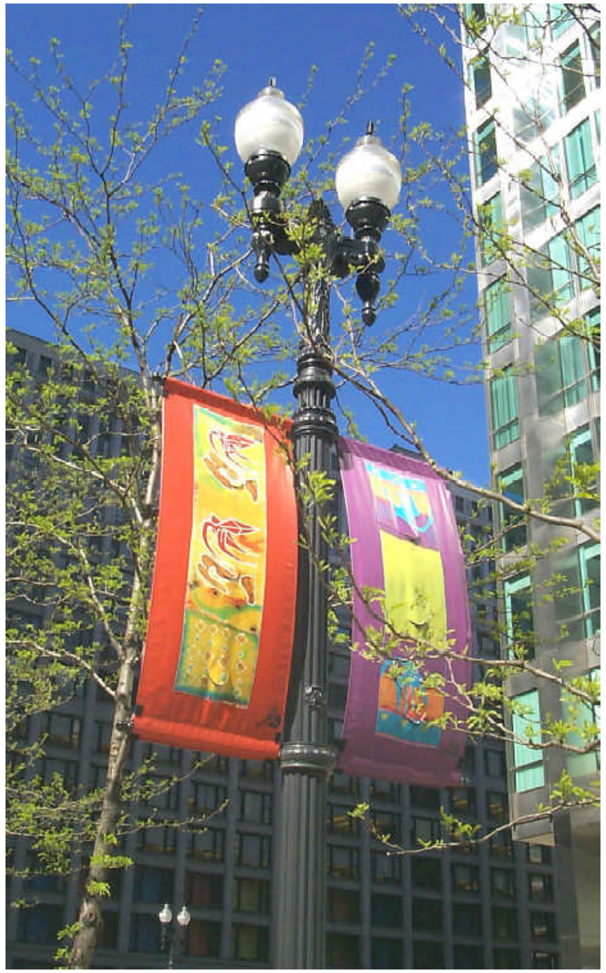


Figure 4.3.46 Dearborn Street
Lights and landscaping in the Loop

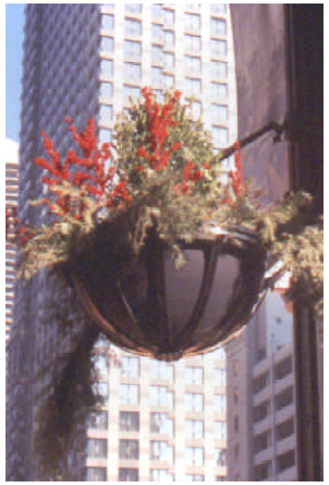


Figure 4.3.47
Hanging planters add greenery and keep sidewalks open

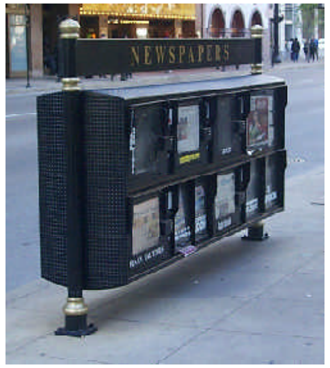


Figure 4.3.48 Randolph Street
Consolidated newspaper rack

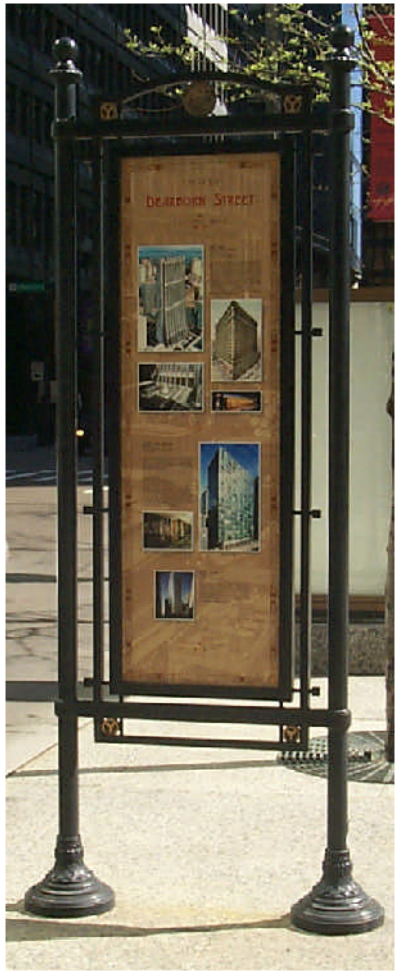


Figure 4.3.49 Street signage explains local points of interest

STREET FURNITURE

In locations where street and sidewalk widths do not allow for planters or landscaped medians, street furnishings can be used to “green” the streets. Streetlights with banners or planters add color and festivity to the pedestrian experience. Keeping street furniture, such as newspaper stands, orderly and compact helps to increase the amount of space for pedestrian movement, especially on narrow sidewalks. Signage, special paving and other details further enhance the pedestrian experience. Maintaining consistent standards for the design and placement of these furniture elements in the various districts of the Central Area will also help to define their identity.

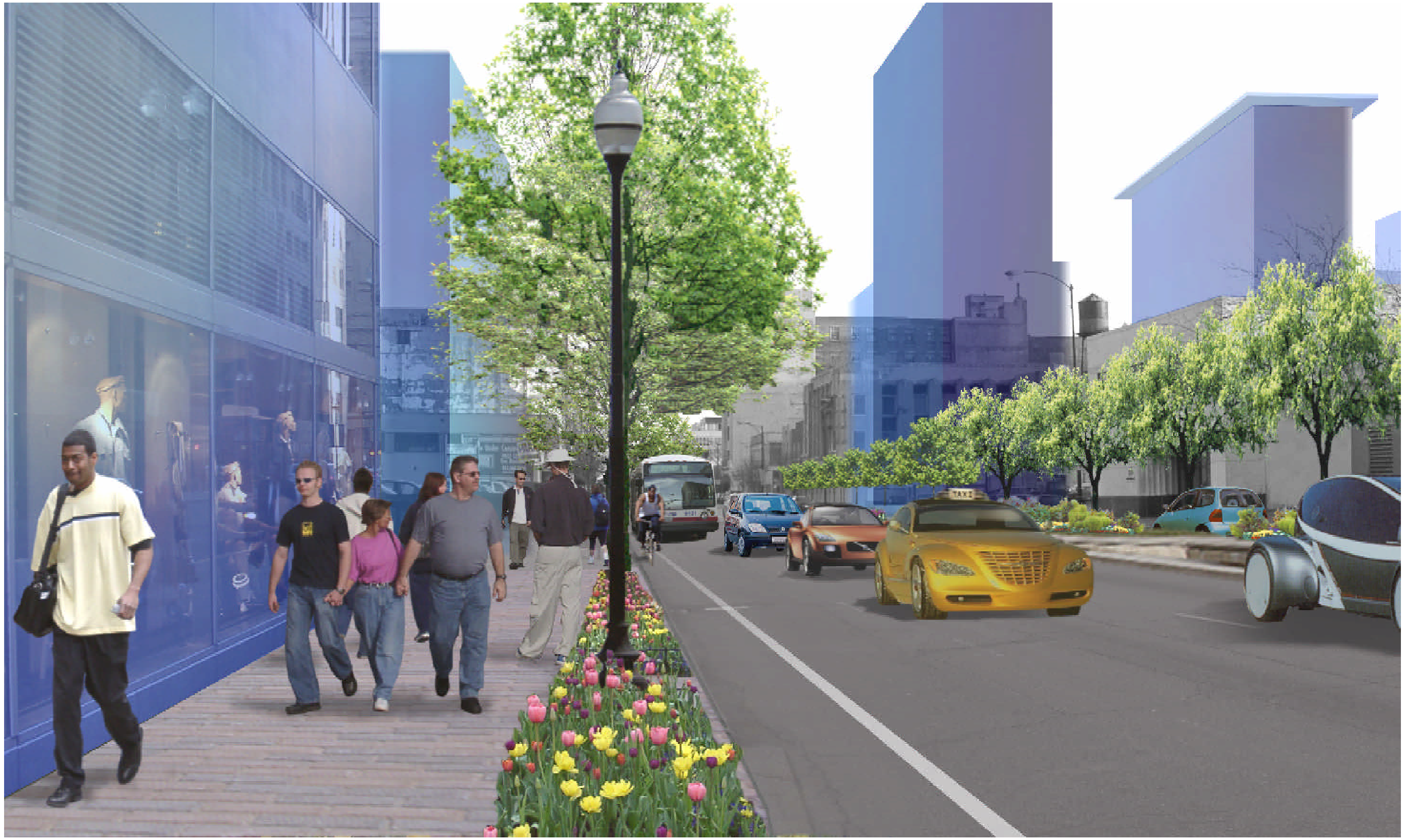


Figure 4.3.50 Michigan Avenue, looking south from Roosevelt Road, in 2020. South Michigan Avenue will be a landscaped street connecting the Near South district to the Loop. It will be a major pedestrian, bicycle and transit corridor.

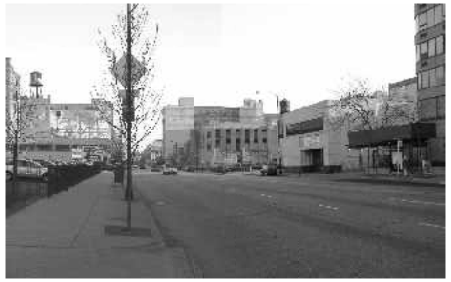
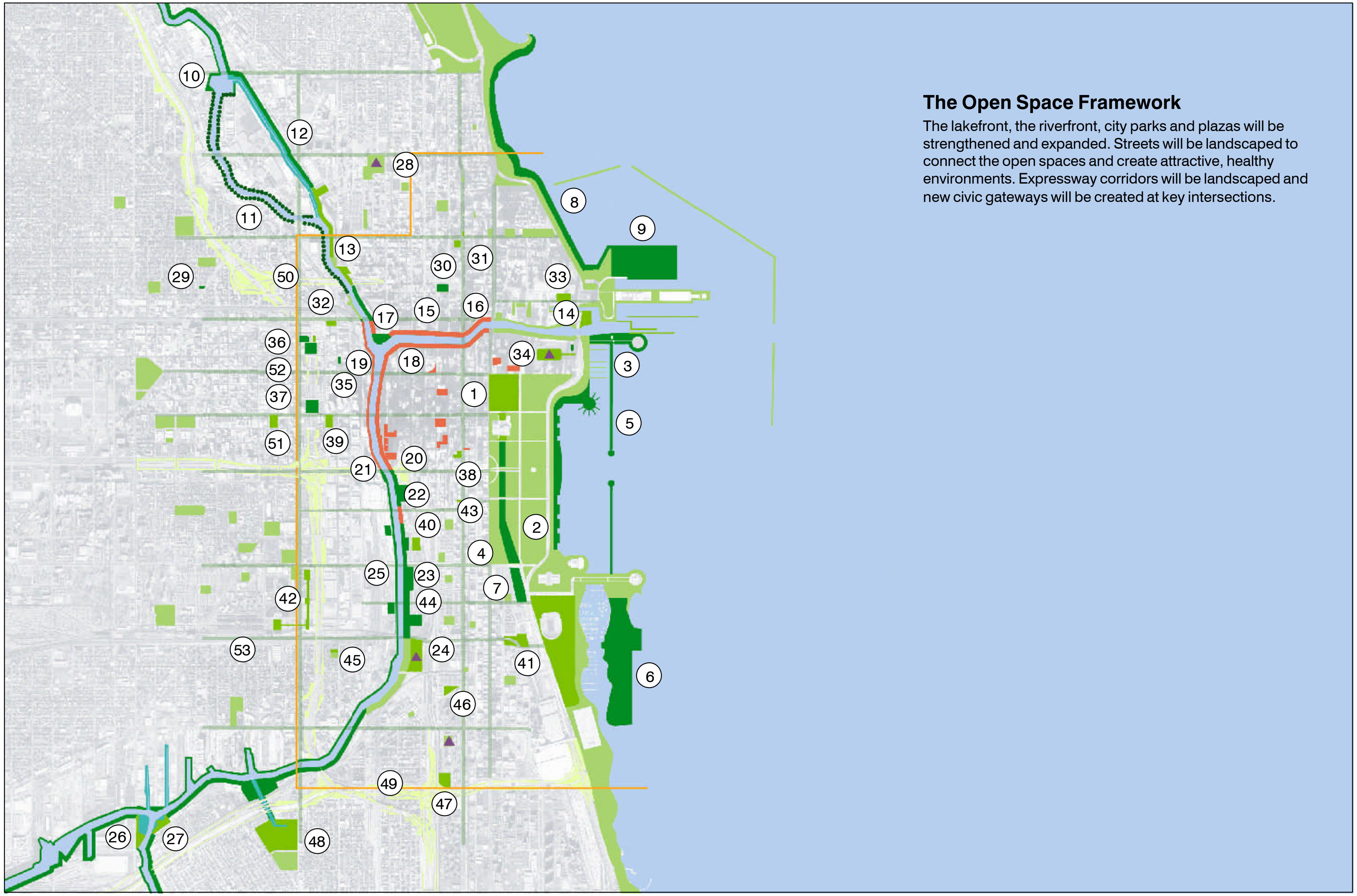


Figure 4.3.51 Michigan Avenue today.

Figure 4.3.52
The Open Space Framework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The Open Space Framework

The lakefront, the riverfront, city parks and plazas will be strengthened and expanded. Streets will be landscaped to connect the open spaces and create attractive, healthy environments. Expressway corridors will be landscaped and new civic gateways will be created at key intersections.

🟩 Existing Open Space
🟩 Planned Open Space
🟩 Open Space Vision
🟦 Vision for Wetlands along River
🟨 Landscaped Freeways
●● Landscaped Riverbanks
🟥 Plazas and Riverwalk

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

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Summary of Open Space Recommendations

Key Lakefront Recommendations

1. Complete Millennium Park.
2. Implement the Grant Park master plan to create new active and passive open spaces.
3. Create Wacker Pier and a new public institution or museum. Renovate the Coast Guard Station.
4. Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers.
5. Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor.
6. Increase wetland plantings at the perimeter of Meigs Field.
7. Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station.
8. Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a new landscaped embankment.
9. Integrate park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant.

Key Chicago River Recommendations

NEAR NORTH

10. Add a new boat house, pedestrian bridge and river edge landscape at the North Avenue turning basin
11. Enhance landscaping along the west side of Goose Island
12. Create a new recreational and environmental resource along the east side of Goose Island
13. Ensure continuous river access through the Montgomery Ward site to connect with parks at Hobbie and Erie Streets.
14. Create Du Sable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River
15. Create an active riverwalk with commercial uses along the north side of the Main Branch from the lake to Wolf Point.
16. Create new public space at the Sun Times-Trump Tower Chicago site.
17. Create a new public park at Wolf Point.

THE EXPANDED LOOP

18. Create a continuous pedestrian riverwalk along Wacker Drive on the Main Branch from Lake Street to the lakefront as part of the Wacker Drive improvements.
19. Develop a riverfront plaza on the west bank of the South Branch between Randolph and Lake Streets.
20. Develop a public riverfront plaza at 310 South Wacker Drive.
21. Create new riverfront open space at the Old Main Post Office along with its redevelopment.

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

22. Create a new riverfront park at Franklin Point.
23. Create a continuous public river park on the east side of the Chicago River to provide public access from Harrison Street to Ping Tom Park.
24. Expand Ping Tom Park.
25. Achieve a continuous open space corridor along the west side of the Chicago River.
26. Implement Origins Park plan at the South Turning Basin.
27. Expand Origins Park to serve the Bridgeport neighborhood.

Key City Park and Plaza Recommendations

NEAR NORTH

28. Implement plans for Walter Payton Academy Campus Park.
29. Develop new park in the Near Northwest Neighborhood as new residential development occurs.
30. Develop a new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets.
31. Create a new park at the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and State Street.
32. Create Kinzie Park at Kinzie and DesPlaines Streets.
33. Develop Kraft Park to serve the Streeterville Neighborhood.

THE EXPANDED LOOP

34. Create a new park to serve the Lakeshore East neighborhood.
35. Develop Jefferson Plaza at Lake Street and Jefferson Street.
36. Develop new parks over the Hubbard Street Tunnel.
37. Create a new park over the Kennedy Expressway between Monroe and Madison Streets to connect the West Loop with Greek Town.
38. Reconfigure Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren Streets.
39. Create Old St. Pat’s Park at Adams and Des Plaines Streets.

THE SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

40. Complete a new park at Taylor and Wells Streets.
41. Complete Mark Twain Park at 15th Place and Indiana Avenue.
42. Complete University Village neighborhood parks
43. Complete the Jones High School Campus Park.
44. Develop new riverfront parks as new neighborhoods will develop on the east bank of the South Branch of the Chicago River.
45. Expand the Jefferson Playlot in Pilsen at 17th and Jefferson Streets.
46. Improve park at the South Loop Annex School site.
47 Complete park at 24th and Federal Streets
48. Create a new park at Stearns Quarry in Bridgeport

Key Greenway Recommendations

49. Improve landscaping along expressway corridors and intersections throughout the Central Area.
50. Create a “green” intersection at the Ohio Street feeder from the Kennedy Expressway.
51. Create a “green” intersection and a gateway feature at the intersection of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Expressways
52. Expand sidewalks and landscaping over the Kennedy Expressway connecting the West Loop with Greektown.
53. Develop a new greenway along the St. Charles Airline

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CHAPTER 5

District Recommendations

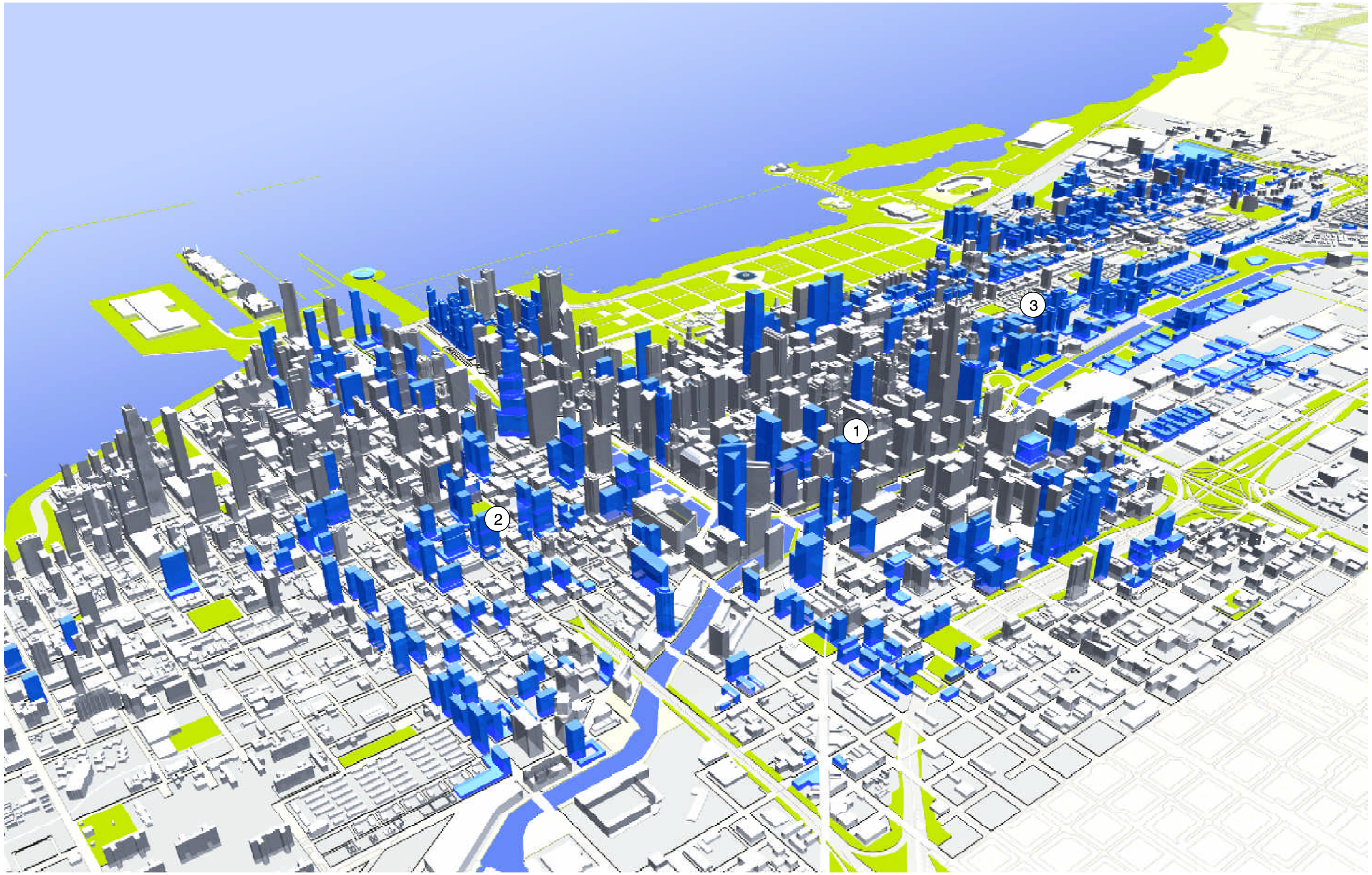
Figure 5.1
Central Area Districts

1. The Expanded Loop
2. The Near North
3. The South Loop and the Near South Side

The expanded Loop is downtown Chicago from the lake on the east to the Kennedy Expressway on the west, and from Congress Parkway on the south to the main branch of the Chicago River on the north. It includes the Central Loop, where most office growth will continue to cluster, the West Loop which will expand the office core west to the Kennedy Expressway, and the East Loop where older buildings house a mix of uses.

The Near North extends from the river on the south to Division Street on the north, and from the lake on the east to Halsted on the west.

The South Loop extends from Congress Parkway in the north to Roosevelt Road, and the Near South Side extends from this point to the Stevenson Expressway on the south. Both are bounded on the east by the lake and Halsted Street on the west.



District Recommendations

The following section of the plan shows how its guiding themes will shape development in the three major geographic districts:

- **THE EXPANDED LOOP**
- **THE NEAR NORTH**
- **THE SOUTH LOOP AND THE NEAR SOUTH SIDE**

These Districts are comprised of corridors, neighborhoods and special places and industrial areas, each with their own unique characteristics. Some of these districts will experience more significant change than others in the coming years. These may involve shifts in land use, changes in the overall density of development or changes in character. Other districts may see changes in infrastructure, transit and open spaces, while their essential role and character within the Central Area will remain unchanged. The development concept for the Central Area is based on continued office growth in the Central Loop and expansion of the high-density office district west into the West Loop. Higher density, mixed use development will also be directed to the Central Area's major corridors. This concept will be reflected in a new strategy for zoning in the Central Area.

Regardless of the diversity of the Central Area's districts and the development that will occur within them, all should reflect the following commitments.

BUILD GREAT PLACES

Great places are created when the public and private realm work together. Natural features, streets, parks and buildings can be organized and designed to respect and recognize each other. Diversity and cohesion can achieve balance. Efficiency and bustle can co-exist. The scale and density of new development will require special attention to the effect on the neighborhood, district and entire Central Area. The most significant buildings must be protected, the distinctive identity of special areas maintained, and the most spectacular views conserved.

CREATE SUCCESSFUL OPEN SPACES

Chicago's Central Area open space system is remarkable. A continued commitment to the Lakefront, the Chicago River Corridor and the system of parks and plazas will maintain this legacy. Many new open spaces will be created where new opportunities arise as new development occurs. Others will require creative approaches to streets, river edges or rail corridors. New open spaces must be visible, accessible and usable by all.

ENSURE A WALKABLE ENVIRONMENT THROUGHOUT

The life of street is one of the Central Area's most remarkable features. Sidewalks also serve as a primary transit system, moving thousands of people around the Central Area on a daily basis. All streets in the Central Area should have usable, pedestrian friendly and attractive sidewalks.

MAINTAIN THE DIVERSITY OF THE CENTRAL AREA

The economic diversity of Chicago's Central Area has been a source of its long-term success while other central cities have declined. With corporate headquarters and banking, finance, insurance, government, law, advertising and design sectors, employment has continued to grow. Many uses - other than high-density office - now make up the Central Area, with retail, cultural, educational and residential uses contributing to its bustle and excitement.

MAINTAIN A CRITICAL DENSITY

The density of the Central Area is key to its success. Even in an age when everybody is connected electronically, there is no substitute for proximity in maintaining and building a diverse, competitive central business district. Functionally, this level of economic activity is most efficiently accessed and served when it is compact. The density of the Central Area must be maintained.

EMPHASIZE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Chicago will encourage the development of a new generation of high performance, energy efficient, resource conserving buildings and infrastructure in the Central Area. The city will take the lead by retrofitting public buildings to save energy and reduce emissions, creating rooftop gardens, landscaping streets and emphasizing public transportation.

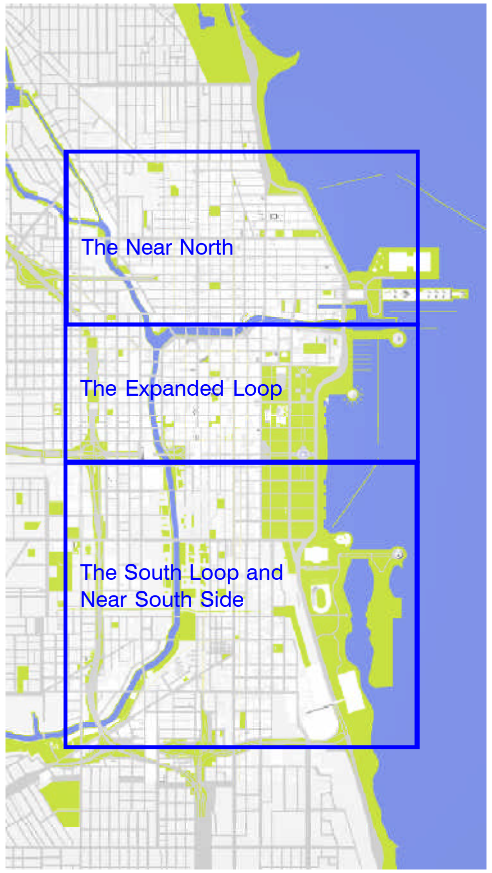


Figure 5.2
Central Area Districts

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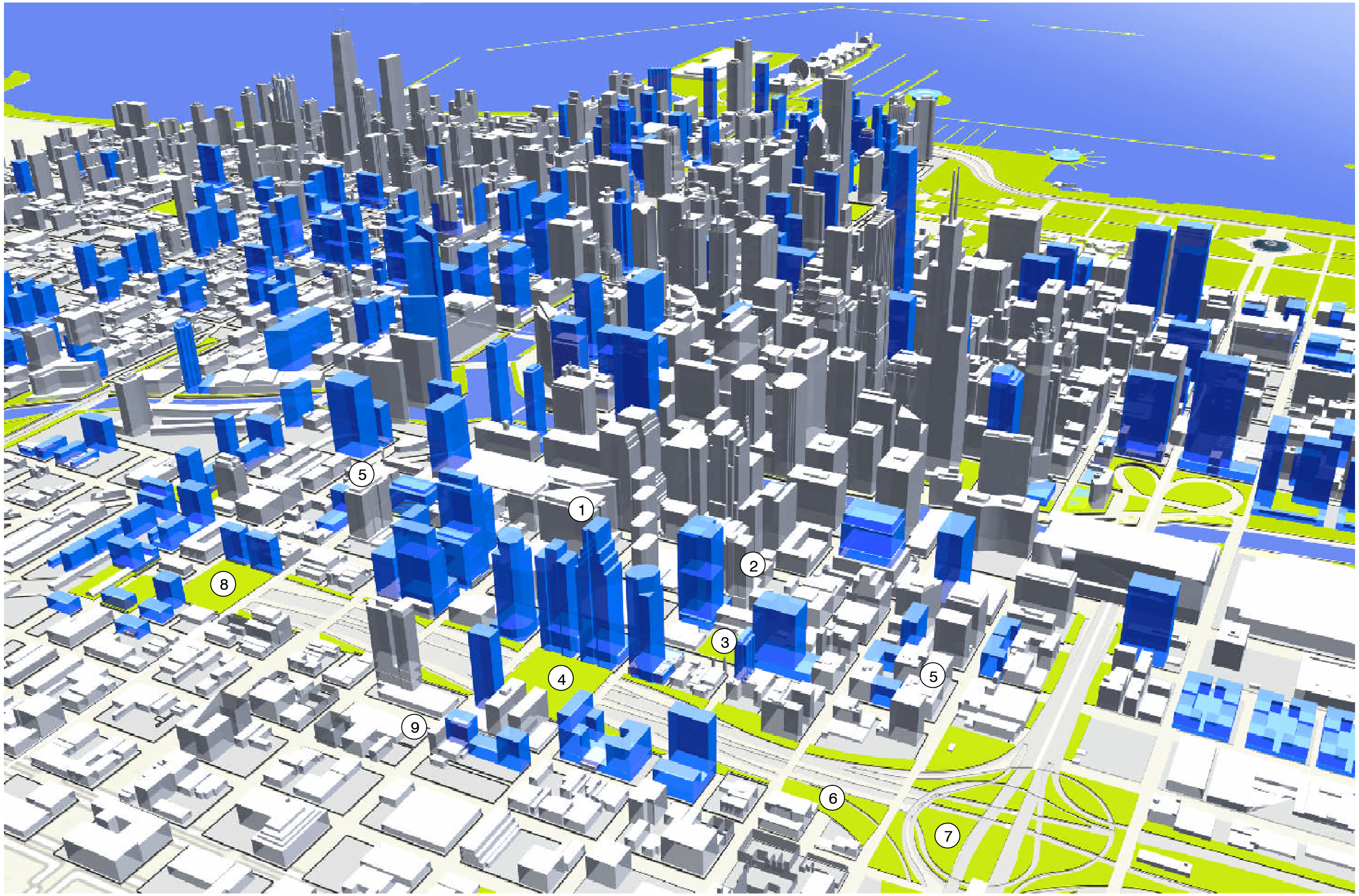
Figure 5.3
The Expanded Loop

The Central and West Loop will accommodate the anticipated growth in the Central Area's office market and employment.



KEY WEST LOOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop high density office uses in the West Loop.
2. Create a main street on Clinton Street above the planned multi-story, multi-modal West Loop Transportation Center
3. Create a new park at Adams Street and Des Plaines Street
4. Develop a new park over the Kennedy Expressway to connect the West Loop to Greek Town and the Near West Side
5. Allow for infill residential development at the Jackson Loft District and the Fulton River District.
6. Landscape improvements along the Kennedy and Eisenhower Expressways
7. Develop a gateway feature and landscaping at the intersection of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Expressways
8. Develop new parks over the Hubbard Street tunnel.
9. Step development down from the West Loop to the Near West Side.

The Expanded Loop

Development Framework

Fifty years ago, the Chicago central business district was largely confined to the 35 blocks bounded by the Loop elevated tracks, with additional development along Michigan Avenue and Wacker Drive. Today the business core extends from Michigan Avenue to Canal Street, and from the Main Branch of the Chicago River to Congress Parkway.

The most dramatic changes have taken place in the western part of the Loop. Streets such as Franklin that were back waters twenty years ago are now home to prestigious office buildings. The West Loop commuter stations were once at the fringes of downtown; now development is beginning to engulf them. It is only a matter of time before new buildings replace the West Loop's surface parking lots.

The Expanded Loop will change significantly over the next 20 years. The Central Loop and the West Loop will see intense office development, while the East Loop will continue to evolve into a vibrant mixed-use district. Historic buildings will be preserved.

The Central Loop from State Street to Franklin Street- Continued Infill

The Central Loop will remain as a high-density employment center for banking, legal, and financial services and government offices, among others. High density commercial office development will infill available sites, while older buildings will be replaced or renovated to meet contemporary needs. Approximately 70% of the new office development and new jobs will be east of the river.

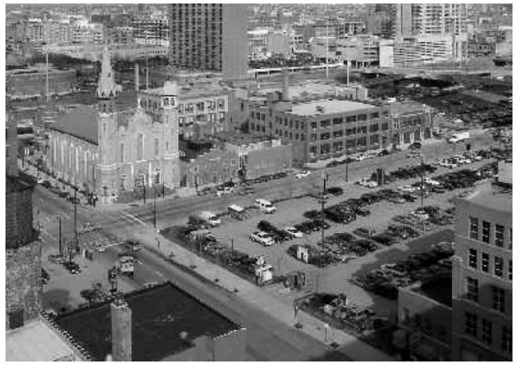


Figure 5.4 Adams Street and Des Plaines Street today.

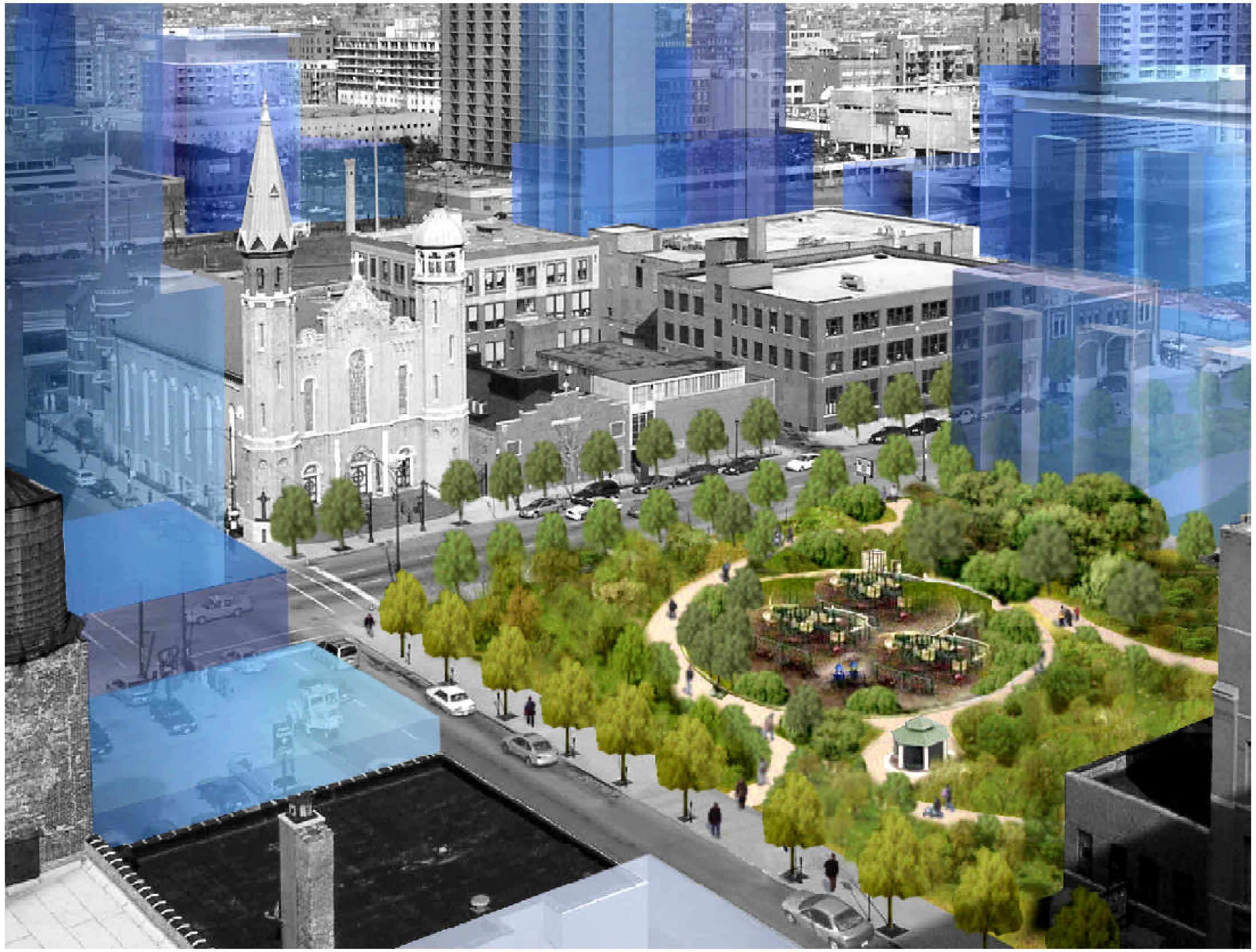


Figure 5.5 Adams Street and Des Plaines Street, with Old St. Pat's Park and new West Loop office buildings, in 2020.

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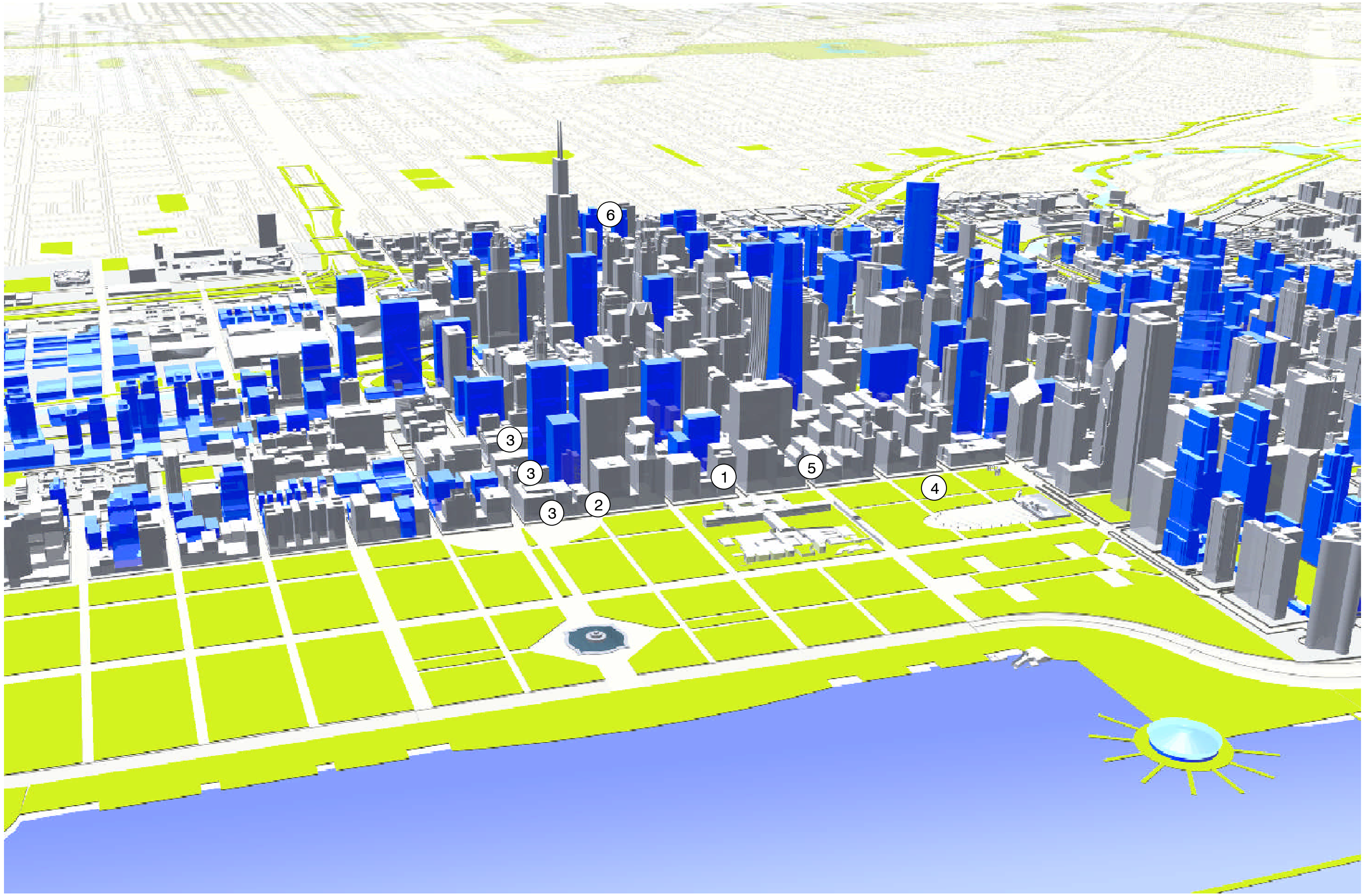
Figure 5.6
The East Loop

The East Loop's vitality will be strengthened.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Residential, cultural, educational and business uses will occupy historic buildings
2. The Michigan Avenue Street Wall will be preserved
3. A vibrant mix of retail will be encouraged on State Street, Wabash Street and Michigan Avenue
4. Millennium Park will be completed
5. An east-west busway will strengthen transit connections between the East Loop and West Loop
6. Pedestrian connections between West Loop transit stations and the East Loop will be strengthened



The City of Chicago is committed to preserving the areas historic buildings and districts by encouraging creative adaptive re-uses.

Dearborn Street will continue to be a significant address for government and commercial offices, with employment building of transit service provided by the CTA's Blue Line. South, toward Congress Parkway, Dearborn will have a mix of uses, with residents living close to smaller offices and specialty retail stores. At Washington Street, Dearborn Street will be part of the Theatre District, offering performances and theatre-related restaurants.

LaSalle Street will continue to be a center for Chicago's banking and financial community housed in both historic and contemporary buildings. LaSalle Street will continue to be a bustling retail street, catering to local workers.

The West Loop from Franklin Street to the Kennedy Expressway - Building a New Urban District

The office core will expand into the West Loop between Lake Street and Jackson Boulevard. The West Loop will accommodate more than 30% of the anticipated growth in the Central Area's office market. To provide expansion room for the growing office core, the West Loop will be up-zoned to permit high-density office buildings comparable to those in the Central Loop.

The West Loop will clearly be a business district, but the mix of uses will shape its character. While high-density office development will be the focus of new construction, the district's residents and visitors will continue to add to its vitality. Well over 6,000 people currently live in and near the Loop between State Street and the Kennedy Expressway, with most living west of the Chicago River in areas such as the Fulton River District and the Jackson Loft District. Mixed-use buildings that combine residential, hotel or other uses with offices will be added. The residential neighborhoods immediately north and south of the West Loop office district will reinforce the vitality that this diversity of uses brings to the Central Area.

A high quality public realm will be emphasized. Landscaped sidewalks and well-lit streets will encourage people to walk. New buildings will be built up to the sidewalk with storefronts and active ground floor uses that provide vitality and light. Curb cuts for service and parking will be limited on main pedestrian and transit corridors.

The West Loop's proximity to the Kennedy Expressway offers an opportunity to create a high-profile image for the area. High standards of design will be encouraged for new buildings adjacent to the Kennedy, which will be seen by thousands of motorists each day.

Clinton Street is envisioned as the "main street" of the West Loop business district. Continuous retail on the ground floor, landscaping and outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes will give Clinton Street vitality. These shops will serve the high volume of pedestrians using the new West Loop Transportation Center (WLTC), a multi-level facility for buses, rapid transit, and commuter and inter-city rail to be built beneath Clinton.

The East Loop from Michigan Avenue and Illinois Center to State Street - Preservation and Reuse

Behind the historic facades, East Loop buildings are undergoing profound change as the office market moves on and residential, cultural, and educational uses take its place. The East Loop has become an academic center, with educational institutions building or converting new dormitory, classroom, and office space along Michigan Avenue, Wabash Avenue, and State Street. Class C buildings along Michigan and Wabash are being converted from office to residential use, and new housing is under construction. State Street's position as the city's shopping hub has been reinforced with the opening of several major stores and the removal of the transit mall. Major expansion programs at cultural institutions including the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Symphony are drawing additional visitors to the area. Hotel activity in the area remains strong, and will likely continue given the East Loop's proximity to premier cultural attractions and shopping.

These positive changes will continue to make the Loop a vibrant 24-hour city. New residents support retail around the clock. Visitors to museums and downtown college campuses are also customers for these retail establishments. These visitors, along with theater district patrons, will continue to boost East Loop restaurants and hotels, giving a new glow to an area that once was deserted after 6 p.m. Millennium Park will add a new dimension to the mix, helping to strengthen the Michigan Avenue retail corridor from the Chicago River south to Randolph Street.

The City of Chicago is committed to preserving the area's historic buildings and districts by encouraging creative adaptive reuse. Renovations and new development in the East Loop must respect its historic character and urban fabric. The impressive streetwalls that have been signature features of Chicago for more than a century will be preserved at the Michigan Boulevard Historic District.

As the Loop continues to expand westward, the East Loop will remain connected to the emerging office district. A new East - West busway will provide quick, convenient transit service between Michigan Avenue and the West Loop.

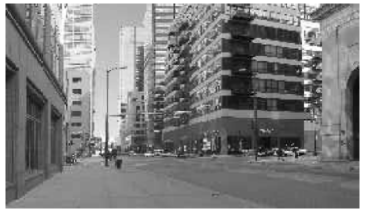


Figure 5.7
Clinton Street today.

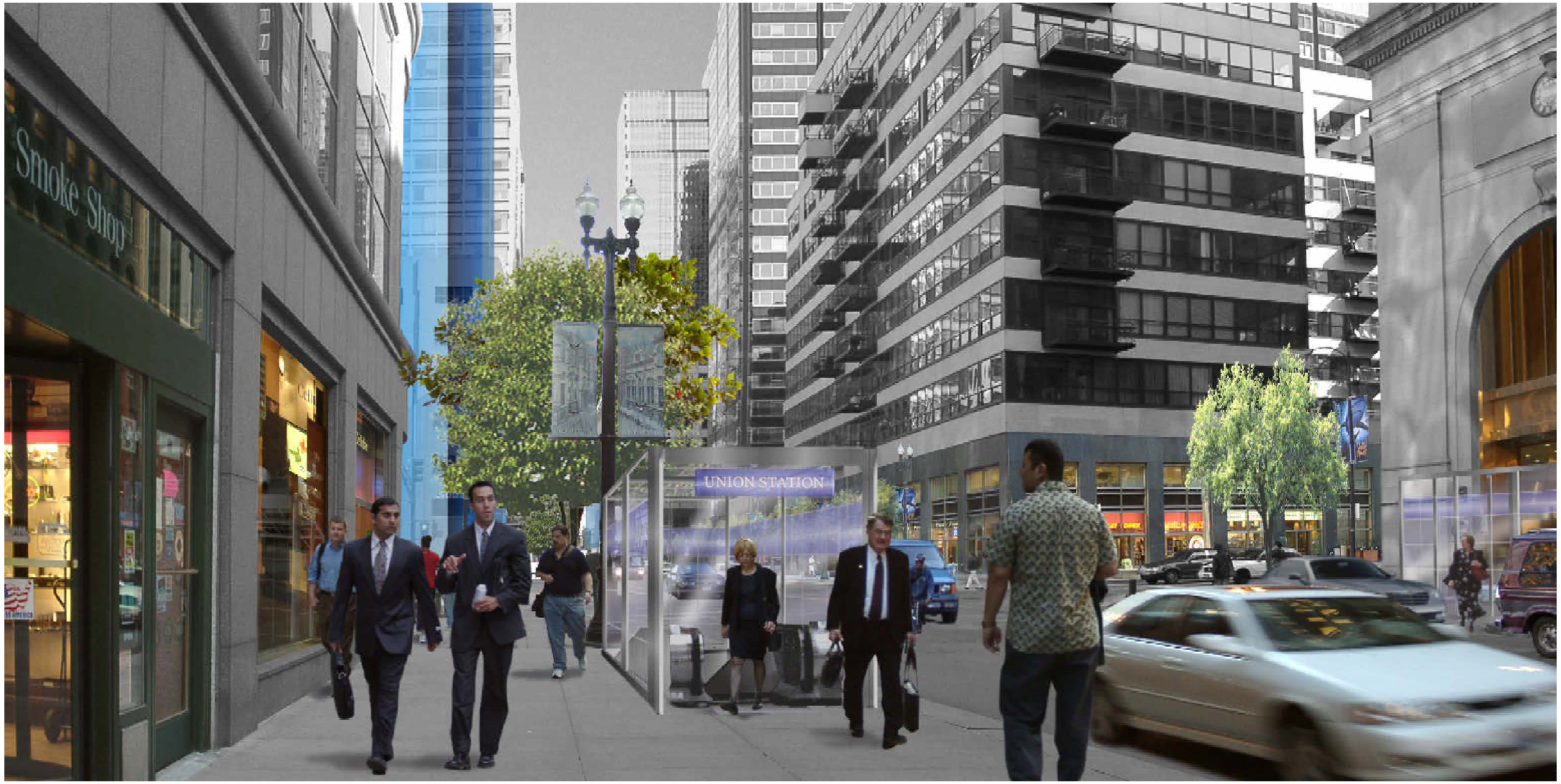


Figure 5.8
Clinton Street in 2020. Clinton Street is envisioned as the “main street” of the West Loop, with access to the West Loop Transportation Center, retail and office space.

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Transportation

Major investment in bus and rail facilities will enable new workers to reach their jobs in the expanded Loop quickly and conveniently.

Loop transportation improvements were described in detail in Chapter 3.2. They include:

- The West Loop Transportation Center
- The East-West transitway
- Continuing renovation of Loop subway and 'L' stations.

Open Space

- A continuous riverwalk extending from Lake Michigan to Congress Parkway will create a great new public place and pedestrian alternative to crowded streets.
- The Grant Park framework plan and Monroe Harbor improvements will complete Daniel Burnham's vision for the lakefront.
- Millennium Park will provide open space and performance venues.
- A new regional park will be created adjacent to a new elementary school as part of the Lakeshore East residential development in Illinois Center.
- A park will be built at Adams and Des Plaines Streets to serve office workers and local residents.
- Larger open spaces will be focused where the Chicago River meets major streets, including at Congress Parkway.
- Decking over a section of the Kennedy Expressway in the West Loop may also create additional park land and eliminate existing barriers between the loop and neighborhoods west of the expressway.

Adjacent district: The Near West Side

Recommendations from the 1999 Near West Side Plan for the area west of Halsted Street are compatible with and complement these recommendations for West Loop. The Near West Side Plan identifies significant development potential including opportunities to expand existing institutional campuses and develop new ones. The district can also be promoted as a location for commercial office space.

Recommendations include improving the streetscaping to help define the identity of the district, and encouraging residential uses, cultural uses and ground floor neighborhood-oriented retail. New parks will be developed in the east and central areas of the Near West Side that are currently underserved.

New development should be consistent with the district's loft character, and should make use of existing structures through adaptive reuse. In general, development should step down from the high-density corridor at the Kennedy and Eisenhower Expressways. Higher density residential development will be located along the east side of Halsted adjacent to the Kennedy Expressway. Low to moderate scale housing will be located elsewhere. Higher density development will also be located along the Madison Street corridor. If development in the area continues at its current pace, new strategies will be needed to deal with increased traffic congestion and parking.

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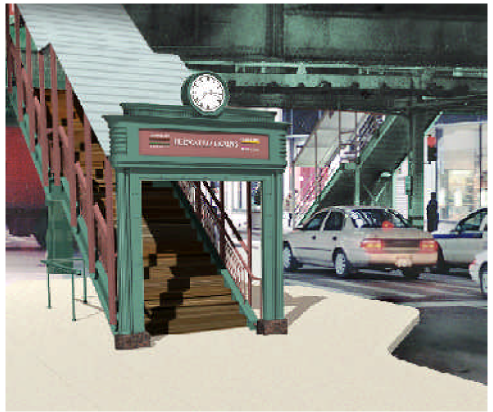

Figure 5.9
Proposed improvements to stairs leading to the 'L'

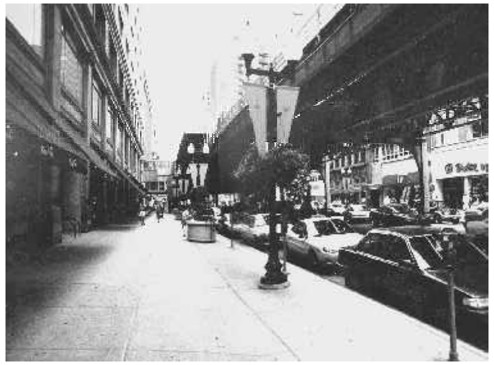

Figure 5.10
Existing Wabash Avenue

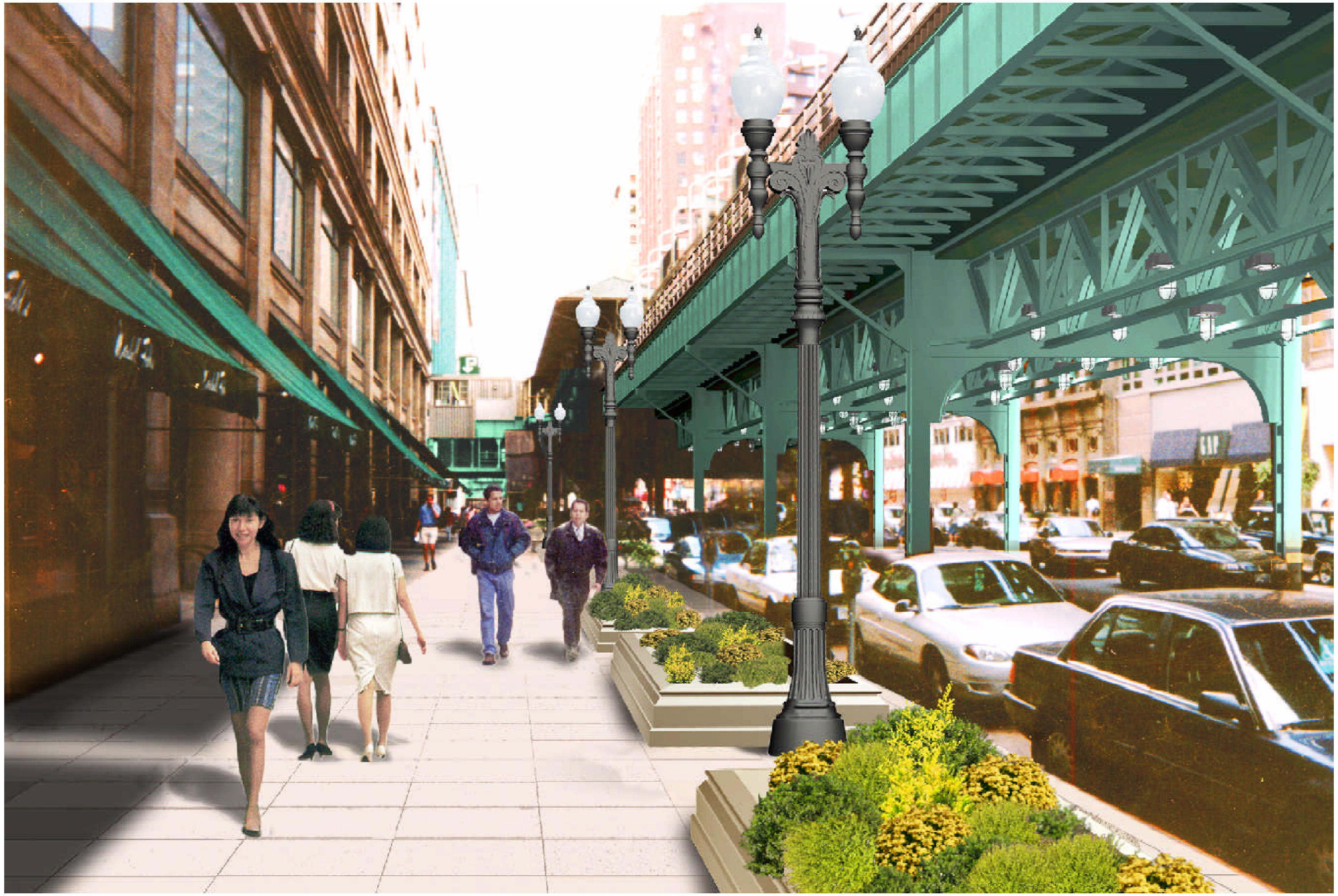

Figure 5.11
Proposed Rebuilding of Wabash Avenue
Rebuilding the sidewalks, restoring the 'L' , addressing landscape and lighting will strengthen the Wabash corridor, with its strong specialty retail districts, office and residential uses. The 'L' and its stations should be restored throughout the Loop.

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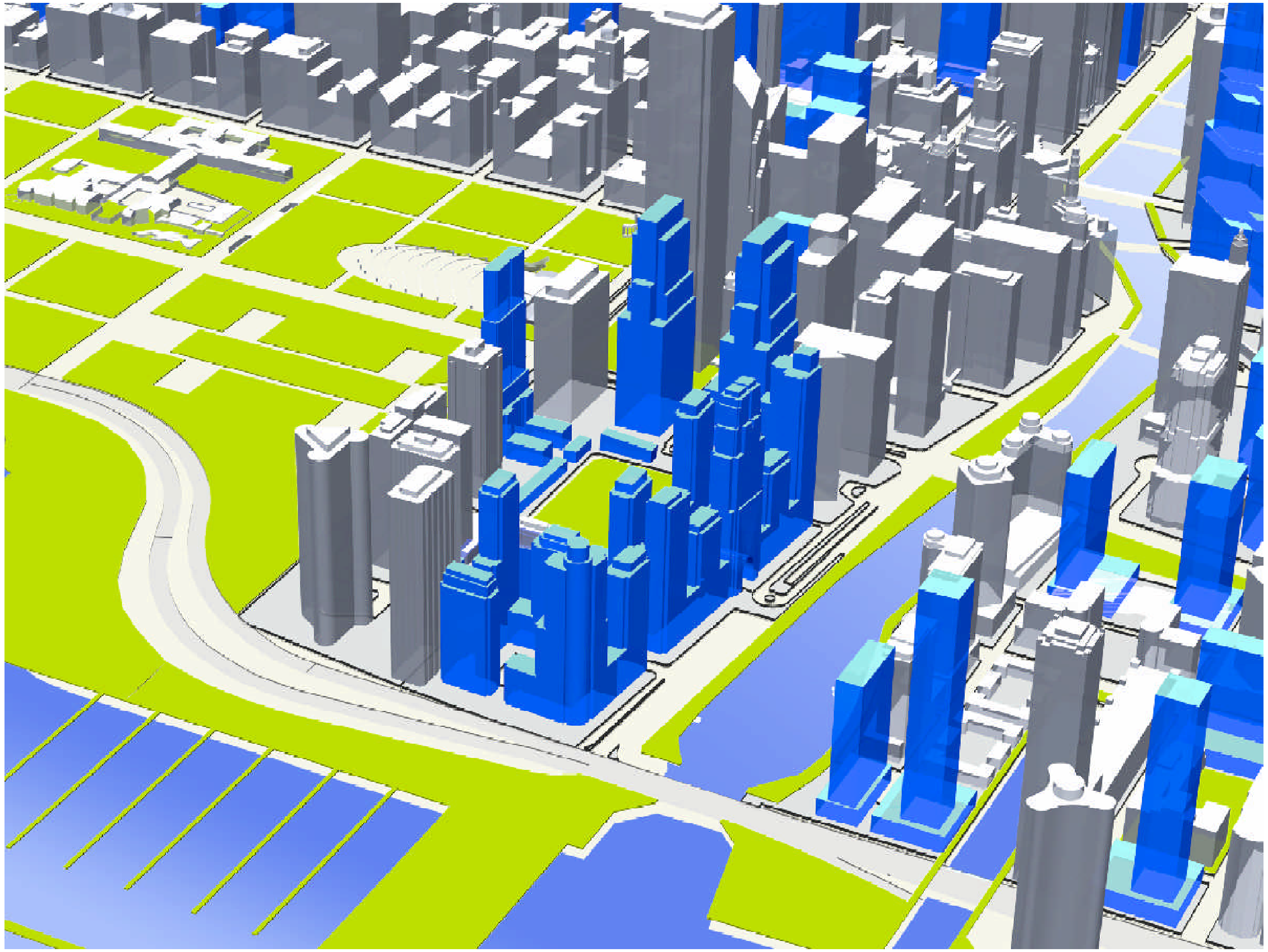

Figure 5.12
Proposed Lakeshore East
The new Lakeshore East neighborhood will provide 4,850 residential units, a new elementary school, office, retail and. a new 6-acre regional park. This neighborhood development will complete Illinois Center.

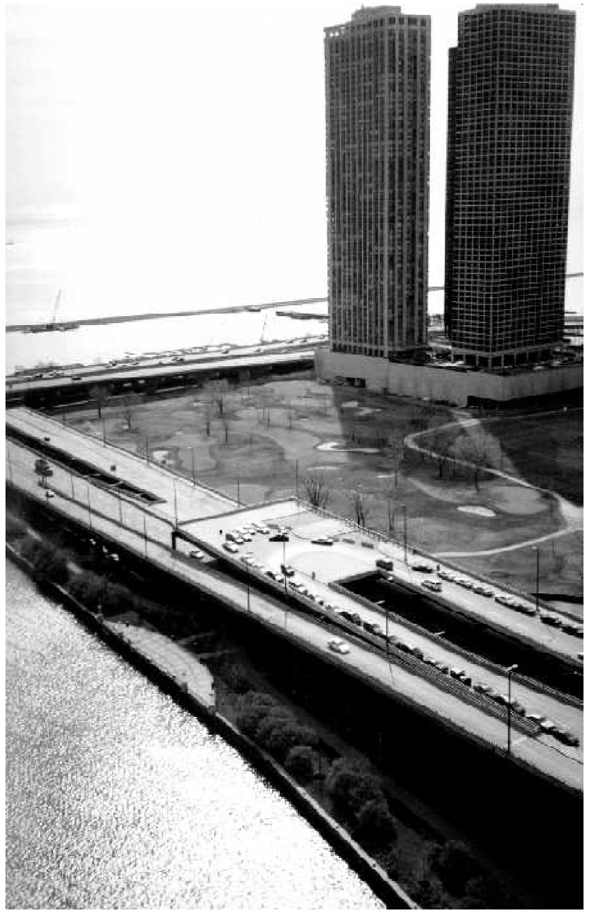

Figure 5.13
Existing Lakeshore East

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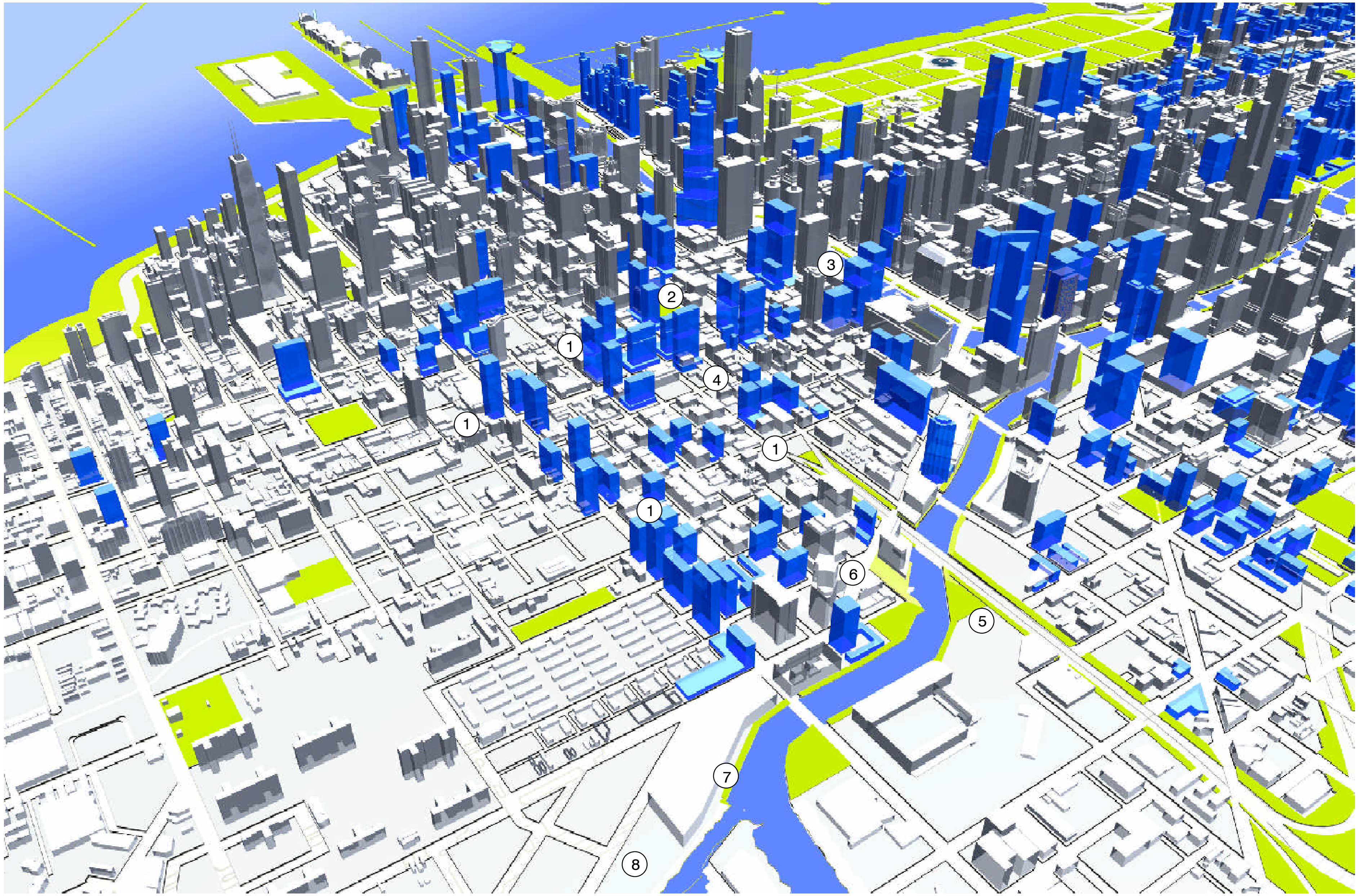
Figure 5.14
The Near North

Higher density development will be directed to major corridors.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Higher density mixed use infill on major corridors
2. A new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office
3. Active uses along the main branch of the Chicago River
4. Sensitive reuse and infill development in the Courthouse, the Mart and the Gallery Districts
5. Landscape improvements along the Ohio Street feeder ramp
6. Completing Erie Park at the North Branch of the Chicago River
7. A riverwalk along the North Branch of the Chicago River
8. A recreational and environmental resource along the North Canal on the east side of Goose Island



Corridors will be established to focus high density mixed-use development, while residential neighborhoods and special places will be conserved. Improved transit and new parks will serve the Near North.

The Near North

Context for Development

The Near North is comprised of River North, North Michigan Avenue, Streeterville, and portions of the Gold Coast. The district is the city's destination retail and tourism hub and home to most of its major hotels.

North Michigan Avenue has been the city's dominant shopping corridor since the late 1970s. Generating well over a billion dollars in annual sales, it has become a major tourist destination, attracting visitors from throughout the U.S. and abroad. It is an exemplary mixed-use district, combining shops, offices, hotels, residences, education and medical institutions, and cultural and entertainment attractions.

Near North residential developments in recent years have consisted mostly of new construction, predominantly high-rise but including some townhouses. *Particularly active areas include:*

- The River East Planned Development in south Streeterville
- The corridor between Michigan Avenue and Dearborn Street from the Chicago River's Main Branch to Oak Street
- Western River North between Orleans Street and the North Branch
- The west part of River North
- Kinzie Park and Kinzie Station

Adaptive reuse of loft buildings has slowed as the supply of suitable structures dwindles, but continues to be a strong component of the Near North housing market. Recent loft conversions include the former Montgomery Ward catalogue and administrative center at Chicago Avenue.

The Near North has a significant concentration of hospitals affiliated with Northwestern University: Northwestern Memorial Hospital, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, and the Veteran's Administration Chicago-Lakeside Medical Center.

Institutional growth is strong, with Loyola University and Northwestern Memorial Hospital undergoing expansion. With 5800 employees, Northwestern Memorial Hospital is a major Chicago employer. Since 1998, hospital admissions have grown by 37% to 39,900 inpatient admissions, and are expected to increase to 45,000 by 2004. Northwestern is the only Level One trauma center serving the Central Area. It brings people from throughout the region to the Central Area. The hospital will continue to expand in the Streeterville community.

New or expanded cultural and entertainment attractions in the Near North over the past twenty years include the Museum of Contemporary Art, Navy Pier, and the Ohio/Ontario entertainment district.

Development Framework

Mixed-use corridors will provide a focus for new higher density development, the character of neighborhoods and special places will be conserved, and historic buildings will be preserved while great new architecture is encouraged.

The *North Michigan-State Corridor* consists of Michigan Avenue, Rush Street, Wabash Avenue, and State Street and stretches from the Chicago River to Division Street. This corridor will continue to be a major destination for shopping, entertainment and visitor accommodations.

The *Ontario/Grand Corridor*, consisting of Ontario Street, Ohio Street and Grand Avenue between Franklin Street and Lake Shore Drive will be a mixed-use corridor that emphasizes retail, entertainment and office at lower levels, with residential above.

The *Chicago Avenue Corridor* between the North Branch and Michigan Avenue will continue as a high-density mixed-use corridor with institutions, retail, hotels and residential development. Further west, at Chicago Avenue and the Chicago River, the Montgomery Ward redevelopment will help to link River North to the Cabrini-Green neighborhood. As along all Central Area corridors, high-density residential neighborhood development will stimulate retail to serve surrounding neighborhoods.

The *LaSalle Street Corridor*, with a mix of residential and hotel development arrayed along a broad, landscaped boulevard, will be a new Park Avenue for Chicago, from Chicago Avenue south to the Chicago River. Larger scale development should be focused along the LaSalle Street corridor.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND SPECIAL PLACES RECOMMENDATIONS

The Near North includes quiet residential enclaves, historic districts, and other special character areas.

Streeterville will continue to grow as a mixed-use neighborhood that has residents, hotels, hospitals, universities and entertainment. New development must be managed to achieve compatibility with neighbors while recognizing this as one of the Central Area's higher density neighborhoods. New neighborhood parks, the Riverwalk and expanded lakefront open spaces will be used by residents and will attract visitors. New transit will reduce reliance on cars by residents, workers and visitors. Construction of stand-alone parking structures will be limited. Parking and access to Navy Pier needs to be managed to reduce disruption to the neighborhoods. Transit shuttles linking to Grant Park garages would help reduce traffic in Streeterville.

River North will continue its development as a mix of restaurants, entertainment, hotel, retail and residential uses. It is shaped by three special character districts which will be maintained through lower-density zoning, Planned Development review for larger projects, height limits, contextual facade design, and the designation of conservation districts in consultation with local business and property owners, residents, and public officials.

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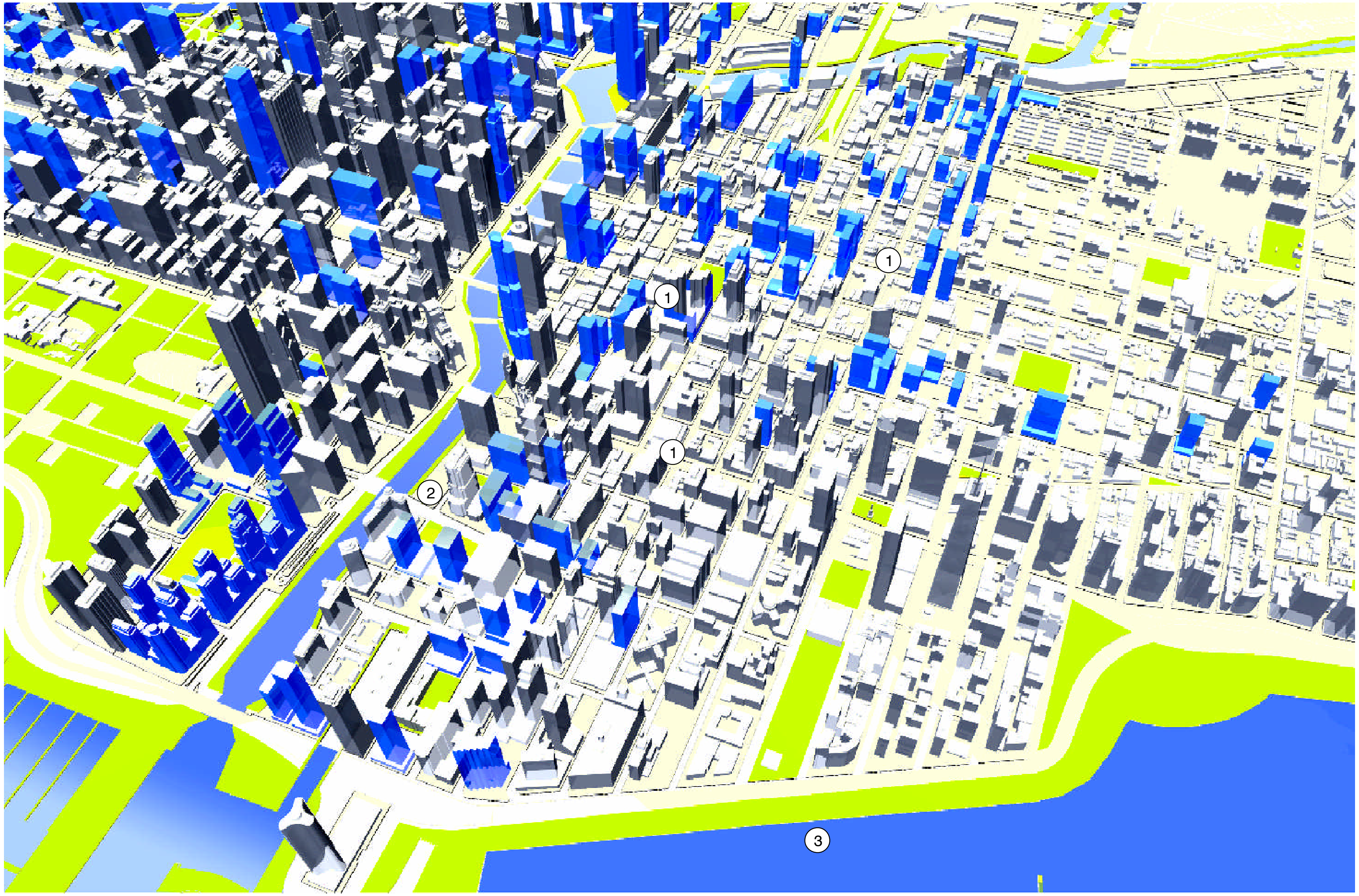
Figure 5.15
The Near North

Higher density development will be directed to major corridors.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Higher density mixed-use development on major corridors. Major corridors are LaSalle, Chicago, Grand/Ontario, and Michigan Avenue.
2. A riverwalk with commercial activities will be developed along the north bank of the Main Branch of the Chicago River
3. Widen and landscape the lakefront open space between Olive Park and North Avenue Beach

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- *The Gallery District* between the Chicago River and LaSalle Street north of Erie Street was previously a light manufacturing district and has found new life as a center for Chicago's art and design community, and a place for small offices. The loft character of the area will be preserved through sensitive rehabilitation. New buildings will respect existing building heights by limiting heights or by setting back upper floors.

- *The Courthouse District* is a collection of historic buildings in the vicinity of the old County Courthouse at Hubbard and Dearborn Streets. This attractive ensemble of small Victorian commercial structures provides homes for many small shops and businesses. These buildings will continue to thrive as a distinctive Near North address.

- *The Mart District* immediately north of the Merchandise Mart includes residences, restaurants, specialty stores and small and mid-size businesses located in older loft buildings and store fronts, as well as newer residential and office buildings. The Mart District will see continued renovation and new development for a similar collection of uses.

Transportation

Existing Near North transit stops will be upgraded, and a transitway will provide convenient access to the West Loop commuter stations

- The Carroll Avenue Transitway extending along the north bank of the Chicago River from Michigan Avenue to the Apparel Mart will improve transit access between the Near North and the West Loop commuter rail stations. Buses exiting the transitway will fan out into the district to provide convenient access to major Near North destinations.
- The CTA Red Line subway station at Grand Avenue and State Street will be renovated in the same manner as the recently completed station at Chicago Avenue and State Street. The Chicago Avenue Brown/Purple Line 'L' station will also undergo major rehabilitation, including lengthened platforms and new entrances at Franklin/Superior and Franklin/Chicago.

Open Space

New parks will be created throughout the Near North to serve residents and workers.

- A new park will replace the city-owned Kraft Building at Grand Avenue and Peshtigo Court. It will include a playground and an underground parking structure.
- The lakefront promenade between Olive Park and Oak Street Beach, will be widened and landscaped.
- Improved pedestrian access to the lakefront via additional under- or overpasses across Lake Shore Drive will be explored.
- A new park will be created at the Fort Dearborn Postal Station at Dearborn and Ontario Streets.
- The courtyard at the rehabilitated Tree Studios at State Street and Ohio Street will be open to the public.

Several river edge enhancements will be implemented, including:

- A large park east of Lake Shore Drive at the mouth of the Chicago River will commemorate early settler Jean-Baptiste Point DuSable.
- A multi-level river promenade will be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Sun-Times site on the Main Branch at Wabash Avenue.
- Riverside open space will be provided at Wolf Point as the site is developed.
- A public riverwalk will be provided along the North Branch throughout the redeveloped Montgomery Ward site from Erie Street to Hobbie Street (1030N), a distance of about one-half mile.
- New riverside parks will be provided at Hobbie Street and at Erie Street adjacent to the existing Erie street-end park.
- Wetland planting in the North Branch Canal will improve water quality and provide habitat for migrating waterfowl.
- A public park will be provided at Kinzie Street and Jefferson Street as part of the Kinzie Station development.

Adjacent Districts

Near Northwest Side
A plan was completed in September 2002 for the Near Northwest Study Area, bounded roughly by Grand, Chicago, Milwaukee and Western Avenues, just beyond the Fulton River District at the edge of the expanded Loop. Its development framework calls for strong neighborhood corridors that offer a mix of retail, entertainment, office, work space and residential uses, and are served by transit. Residential development should respect the historic context of neighborhoods including Eckhart Park, Noble Square East Village, and Ukrainian Village.

Transportation enhancements should be designed to ensure adequate and accessible service and to maintain good traffic circulation. Upgraded open space and new neighborhood parks are a high priority, as are pedestrian-friendly, bicycle-oriented landscaped streets.

Near North Redevelopment Initiative
The area bounded by Chicago Avenue, North Avenue, Wells Street and Halsted Street is the near North Tax Increment Finance District, and the subject of the Near North Redevelopment Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to create a mixed-income community, and to improve the area through public investment in schools, parks and other amenities. Redevelopment of land owned by the city or the Chicago Housing Authority will create mixed-income communities with the following ratios: 50% market-rate, 30% public housing and 20% affordable rental units.

Public investment and private redevelopment are transforming the neighborhood. A new library, police station, park, elementary and high schools as well as a retail mall have brought new services to residents. The area is well served by bus and rapid transit. Open space improvement will continue, with plans to expand facilities at Seward Park, improved public access to Stanton Park and a new two-acre park.

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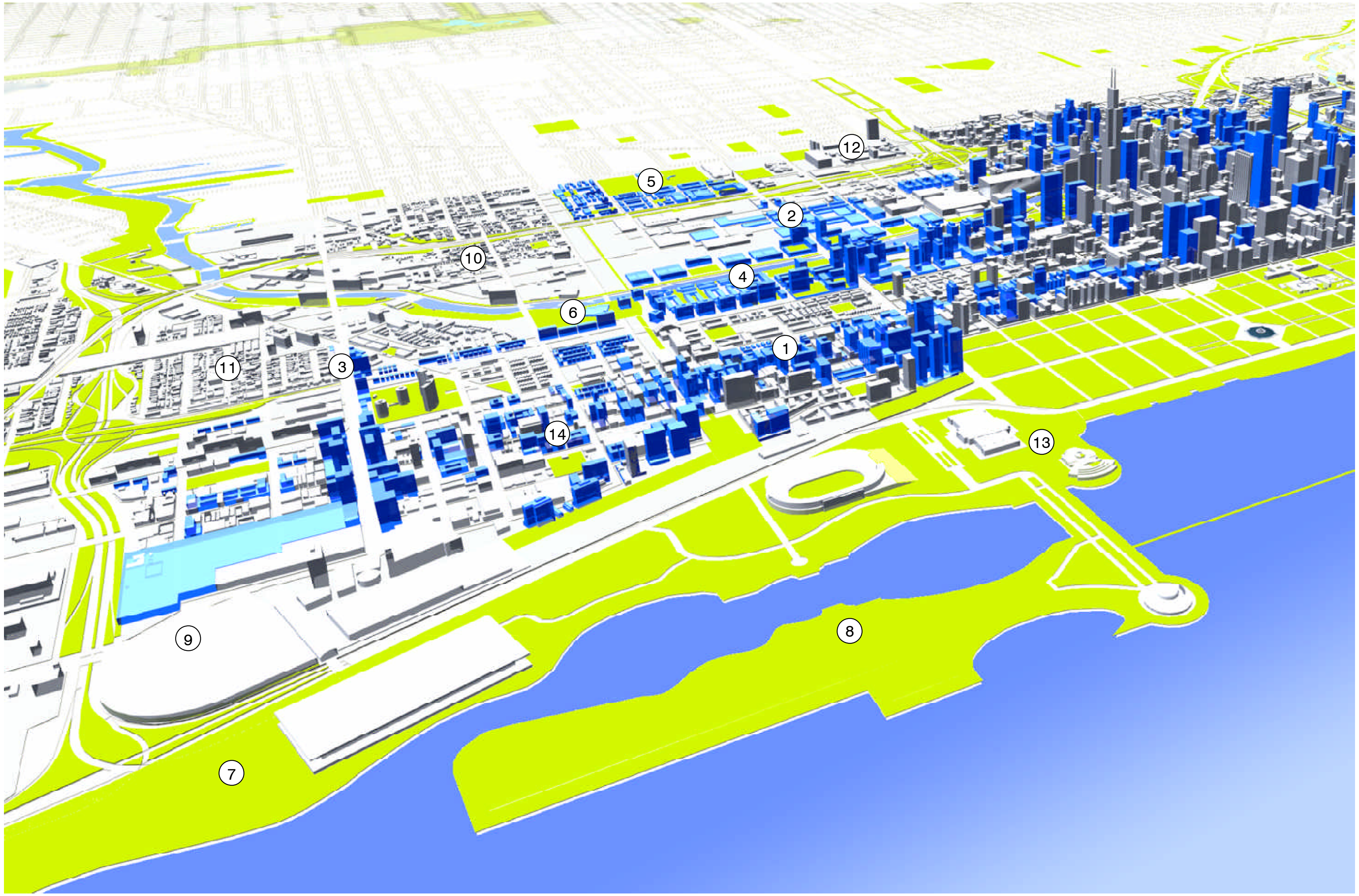
Figure 5.16
The South Loop and Near South

The South Loop and the Near South provide the greatest opportunities for new development.

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH PROJECT AREAS

1. The Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor
2. The Roosevelt Road Corridor
3. The Cermak Road Corridor
4. The South River Neighborhood
5. University Village
6. Ping Tom Park
7. Burnham Park
8. Northerly Island Park
9. McCormick Place
10. Pilsen
11. Chinatown
12. University of Illinois at Chicago
13. Museum Campus
14. Prairie Avenue District



The South Loop and Near South Side

Context for Development

With the largest amount of vacant land in the Central Area, the South Loop and Near South Side present excellent opportunities for continued residential neighborhood development.

The South Loop and Near South districts experienced a rebirth in the late 1970s with the reclamation of rail yards and printing houses for housing at Dearborn Park and Printer's Row. Since then, strong residential development has occurred throughout the district, including both new construction and loft conversions. Recent developments include Central Station and renovation and infill around Prairie Avenue.

The first wave of residential construction was low-rise, with town homes and loft style buildings. The more recent trend is mid- and high-rise construction, which is likely to become more prevalent due to the proximity to the lake and good transit.

The South Loop, close to the central business district, contains a diverse mix of educational, cultural, office and residential uses. Institutions of higher learning, clustered on the eastern edge of the South Loop, will continue to grow.

The Near South contains a similar mix of uses but is more predominantly residential. Given its comparatively greater distance from the Loop, this area will be more affordable than other parts of the Central Area.

Cultural amenities within the district include the Museum Campus, the Prairie Avenue Landmark District and Museums, and the Motor Row and Michigan Boulevard Landmark Districts. The McCormick Place convention complex dominates the southern lakefront.

West of the River, the district contains one of the major remaining concentrations of distribution and service property in the Central Area, spanning the area between the Dan Ryan Expressway and the river, continuing south to the Pilsen Industrial Corridor. The western edge of the district includes a portion of the UIC campus.

Large parcels of vacant railroad land remain, providing ample opportunity for continued growth. The large undeveloped tracts adjoining the South Branch are the Central Area's best opportunity for significant development along the river.

Development Framework

Mixed-use corridors will provide a focus for new higher density development. The character of existing neighborhoods, historic buildings and districts, and special places will be conserved and a new neighborhood will be created along the South Branch of the Chicago River.

Four corridors will be the focus for new development in the South Loop and the Near South.

- The Michigan Avenue - Wabash Avenue - State Street Corridor
- The Cermak Road Corridor
- The Roosevelt Road Corridor
- The South River Corridor

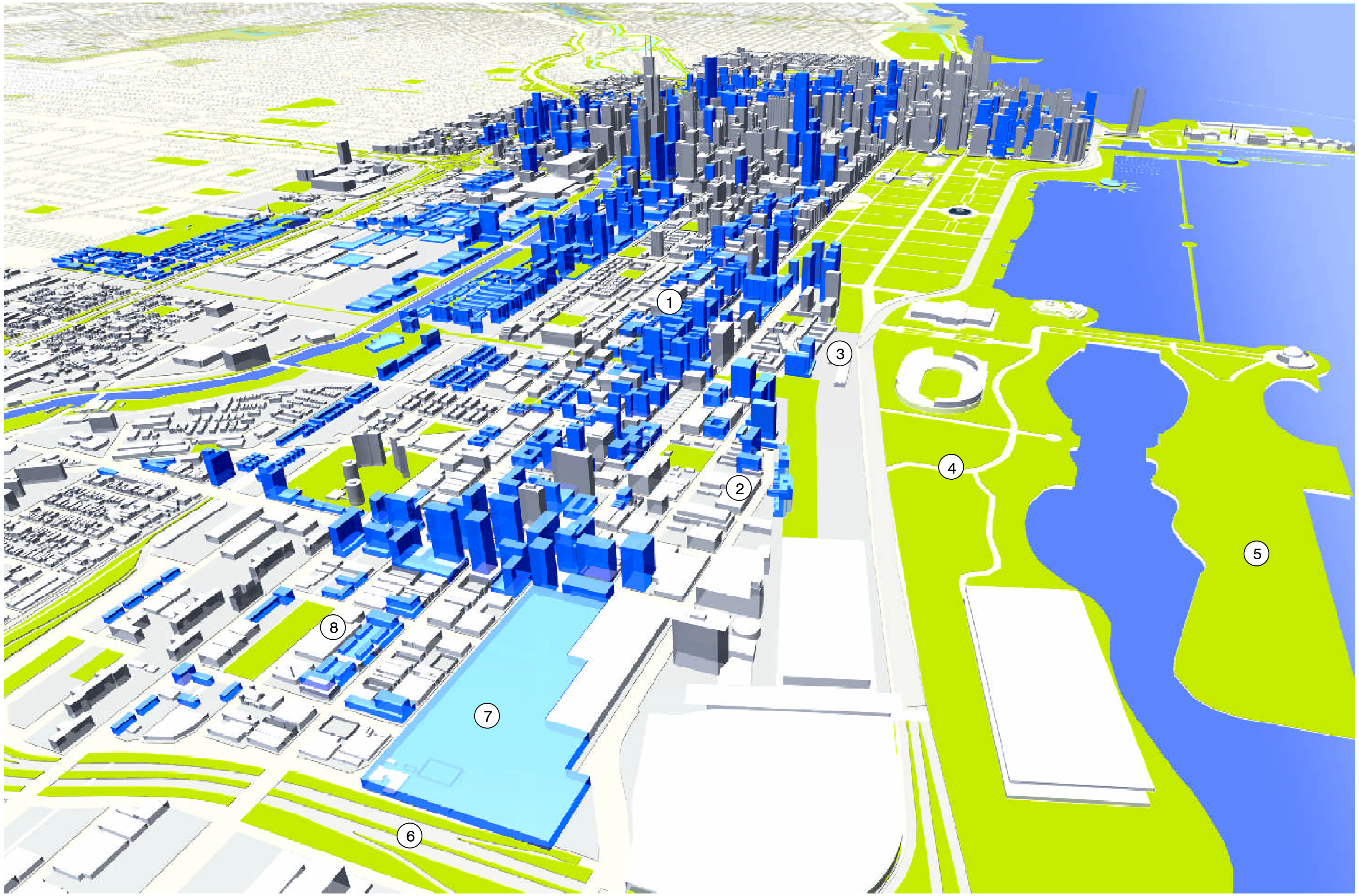
A future corridor addressing higher density housing may occur when Wentworth is extended north to join Wells Street.

Figure 5.17
The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor

Mid- and high-density, mixed-use development will extend from the Loop to McCormick Place and Cermak Road.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. High density, infill, and adaptive reuse along the Michigan - Wabash - State Corridor
2. Preservation and sensitive infill in the Prairie Avenue District respecting the scale and character of this important Landmark District
3. Completion of Central Station residential development
4. Burnham Park improvements as part of Soldier Field redesign
5. Develop Northerly Island Park
6. Landscape improvements along the Stevenson Expressway
7. McCormick Place Expansion
8. Motor Row Redevelopment



The Michigan - Wabash - State Corridor

The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor will continue to develop as a high-density corridor incorporating housing, education, cultural, retail, entertainment and office. The Corridor will link the Cermak Corridor to the Museum Campus, Grant Park and the Loop. Because of the proximity to transit, stacked flats, mid-rise and taller buildings will be encouraged, with densities higher than those in surrounding neighborhoods. The renovation of existing buildings and new construction for educational institutions will continue. Ground floor retail in taller buildings at key intersections and around transit stations will meet the daily needs of residents and workers. New restaurants will also draw in visitors from other neighborhoods and from McCormick Place. The corridor's landscaped pedestrian-oriented streets will be served by transit.

The newly designated Motor Row Historic District runs along Michigan Avenue concentrated from Cermak Road south to the Stevenson Expressway. The 56 buildings in the district represent possibly the world's largest concentration of early auto showrooms and associated businesses. Motor Row will become a new neighborhood and visitor destination that is home to galleries, nightclubs or restaurants and cultural institutions, with offices or loft spaces above. The area may also serve as an incubator for fledgling museums and arts organizations.

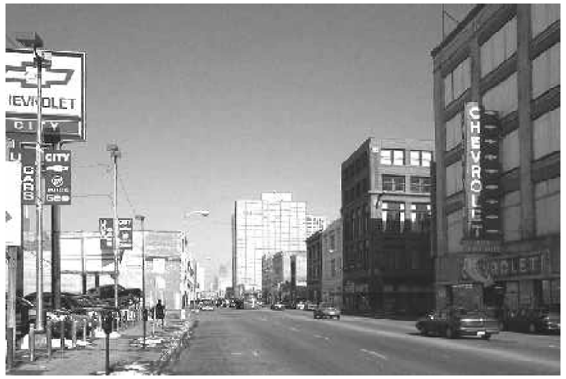


Figure 5.18 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor today.

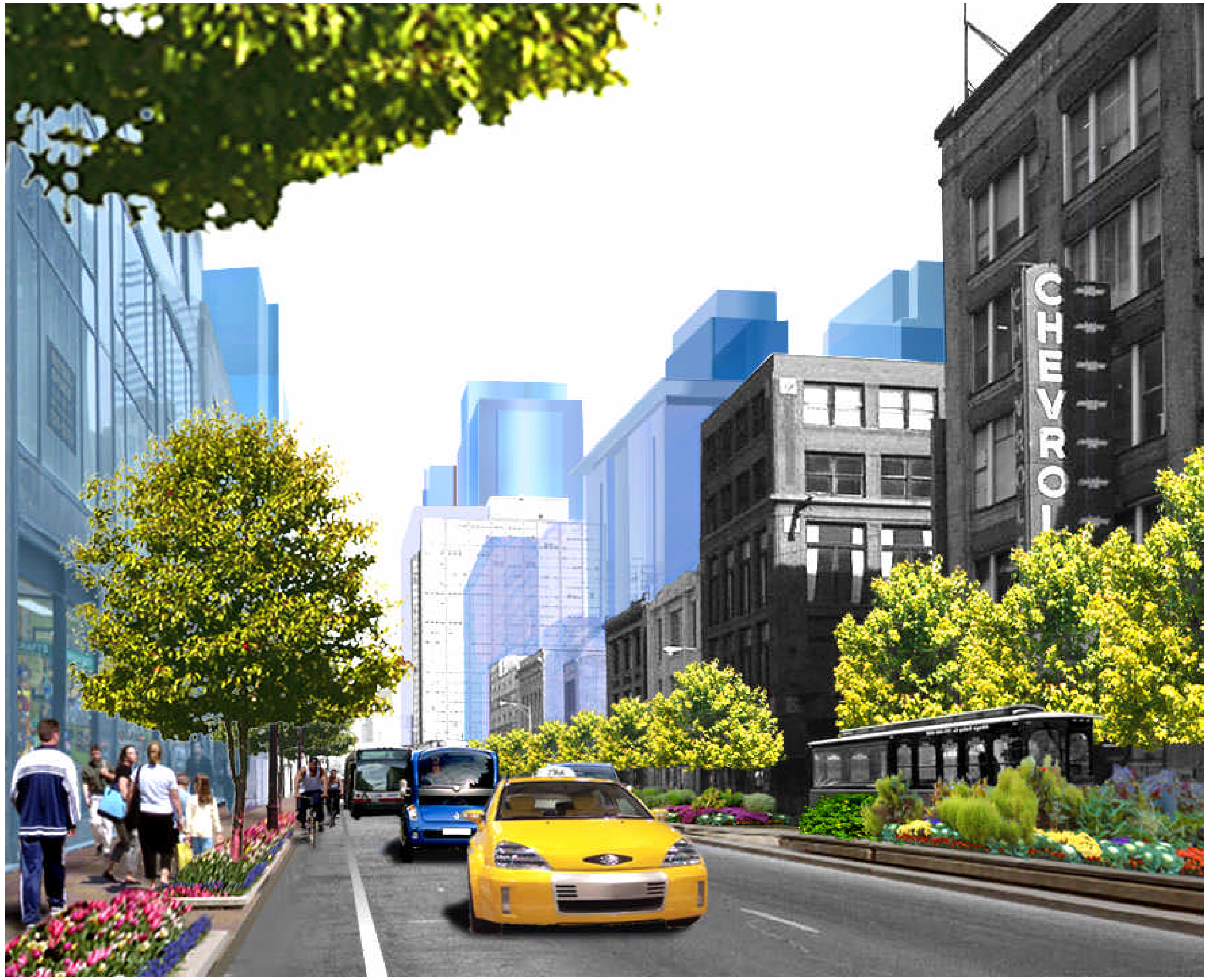


Figure 5.19 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor in 2020. Motor Row will become a new neighborhood and visitor destination.

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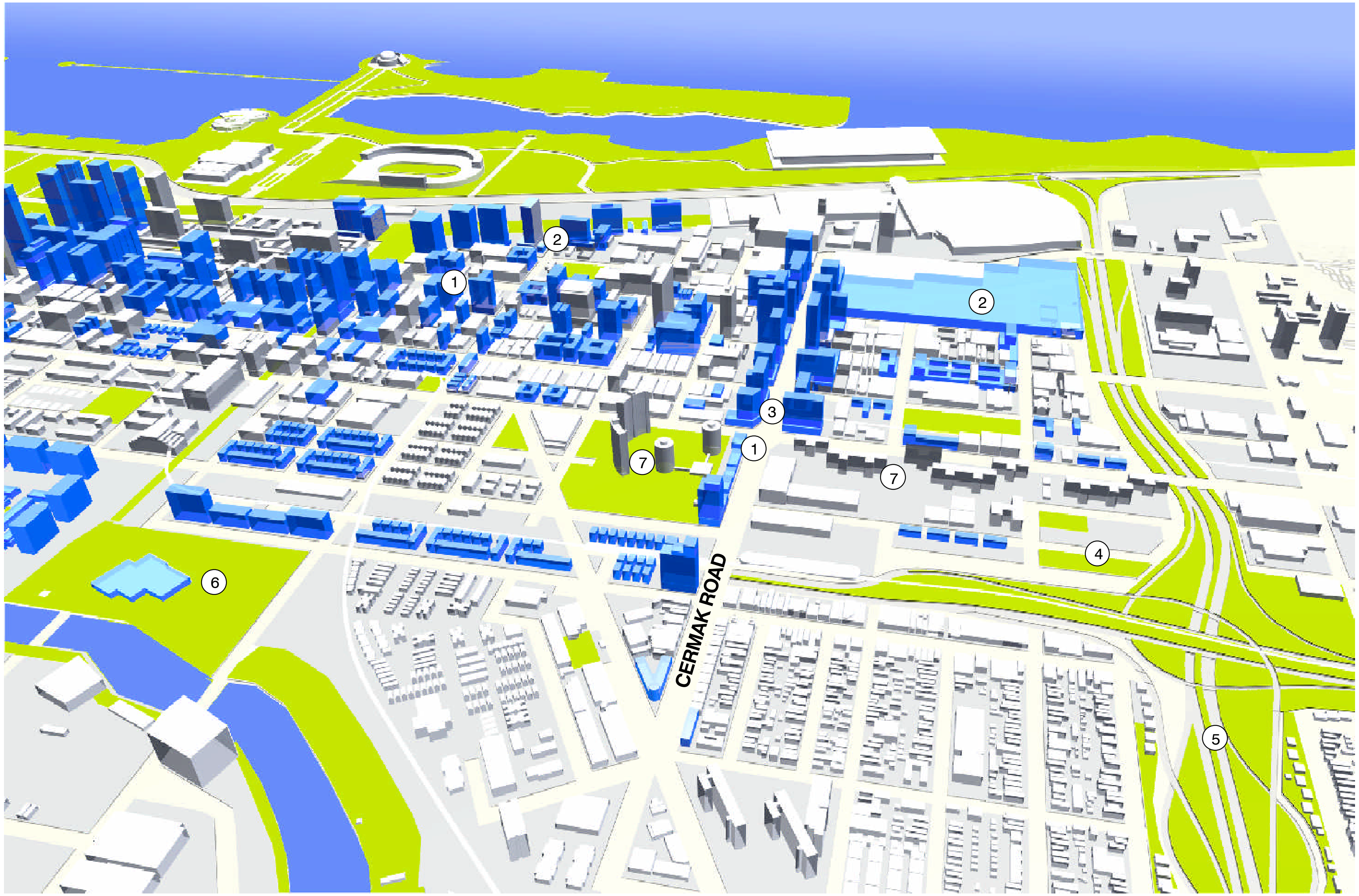
Figure 5.20
The Cermak Road Corridor

The Cermak Road corridor will connect Chinatown, Motor Row, McCormick Place and Lake Michigan.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mid- and high-density mixed-use infill development along the Cermak Road Corridor
2. McCormick Place expansion with an active, urban edge along the Cermak Road Corridor and along Indiana Avenue
3. Potential new Green Line stop near Cermak Road
4. Complete park at 24th and South Federal Streets
5. Landscape improvements along the Stevenson Expressway
6. An expanded Ping Tom Park with a neighborhood field house
7. Redevelopment of the Hilliard and Ickes Homes



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The Cermak Road Corridor - The Connection for an Emerging Urban District

The Cermak Road Corridor offers the potential for a higher-density, transit-based residential neighborhood connecting the Lakefront, McCormick Place and Chinatown. Some hotels may be constructed particularly in proximity to McCormick Place. Ground floor retail, restaurant and service uses will add vitality. Future transportation enhancements (including a revitalized Metra station on Cermak Road at McCormick Place and a new CTA Green Line station near Cermak and State) will encourage transit use.

McCormick Place is one of the city's great visitor magnets, attracting some 4 million people annually to trade shows and conventions. McCormick Place will continue to expand and is expected to add an additional 800,000 square feet by 2007. McCormick Place will also build stronger connections with surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas, including Motor Row, Prairie Avenue and Chinatown.

The new Cermak Elementary School and Teacher's Academy is a major asset for the community. It includes a new neighborhood park and community center. Chinatown will continue to thrive as a distinctive residential community and a long-standing visitor destination.

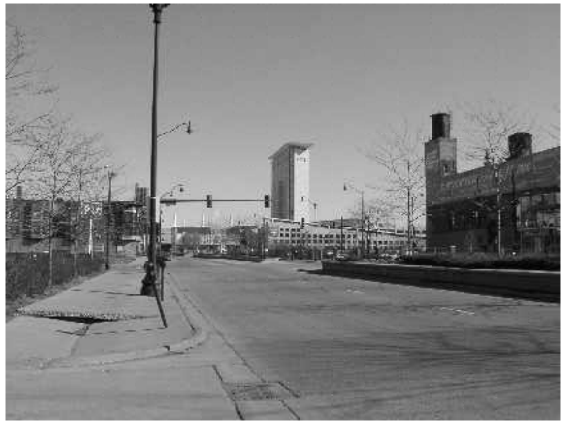

Figure 5.21 The Cermak Road Corridor today.

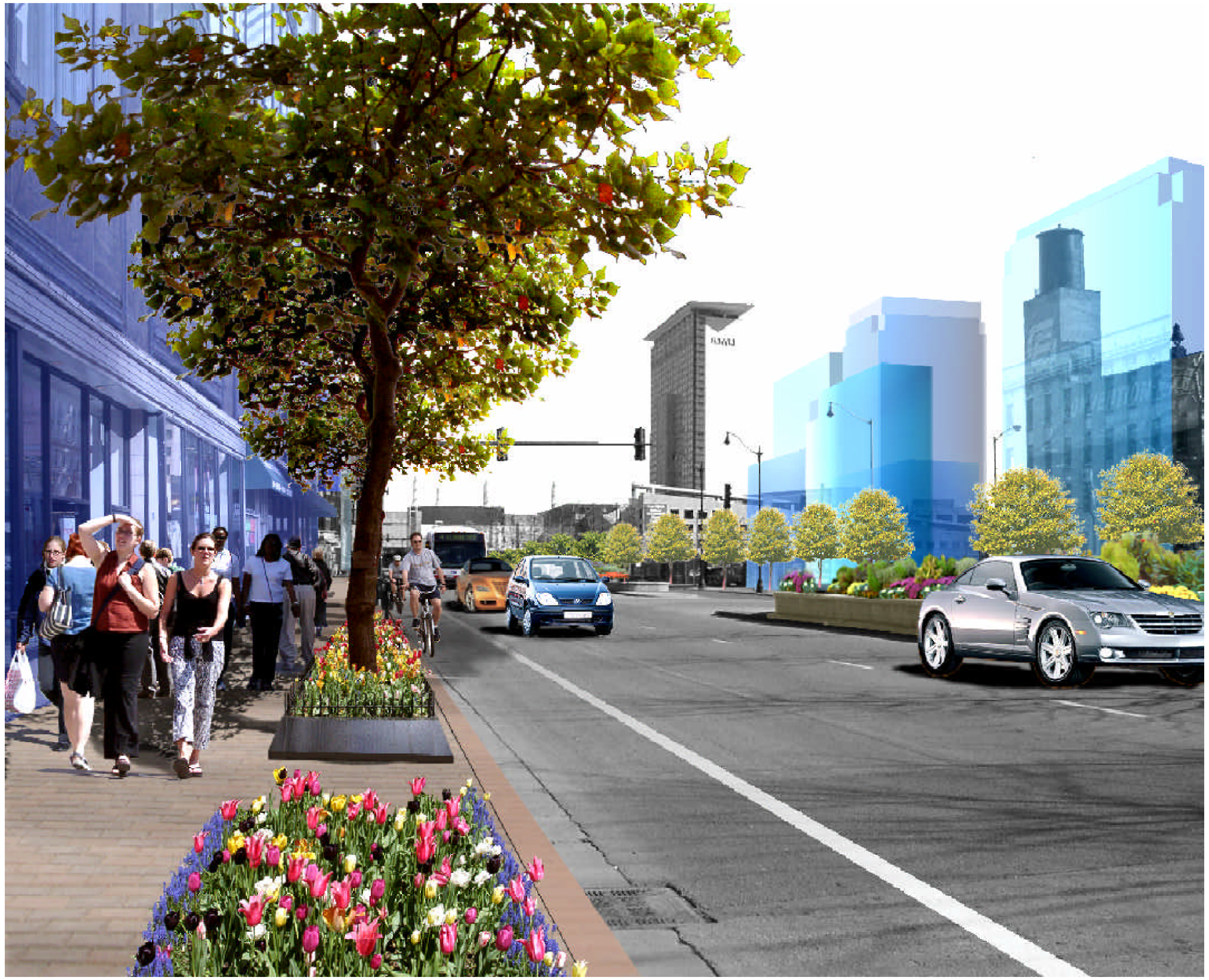

Figure 5.22 The Cermak Road Corridor in 2020. Cermak Road will be developed as a high-density mixed-use corridor linking Pilsen and Chinatown to McCormick Place and the Lakefront.

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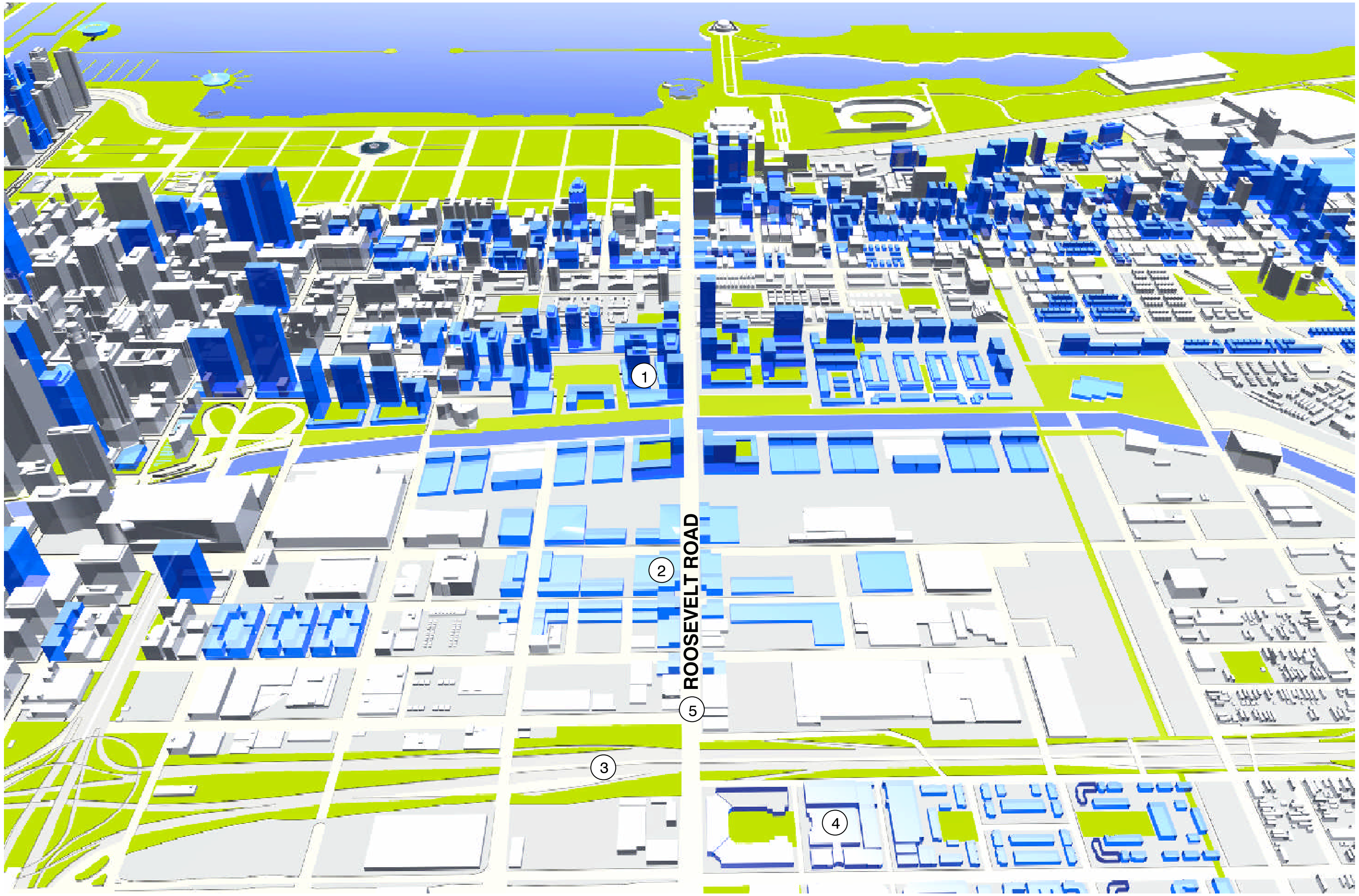
Figure 5.23
The Roosevelt Road Corridor

Roosevelt Road will develop as a mixed-use corridor, emphasizing regional retail, west of the river and mixed-use development east of the river.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
1. High density residential infill development between the east riverfront and Clark Street
2. Large scale retail west of the Chicago River
3. Landscape improvements along the Dan Ryan Expressway
4. Completion of University Village and Neighborhood parks
5. Roosevelt Road as a gateway boulevard to the Central Area and Museum Campus

The Roosevelt Road Corridor
A Major City Gateway and Urban Boulevard

Roosevelt Road is envisioned as a great urban boulevard that is one of the Central Area's important gateways. Landscaping and lighting should reflect the importance of this civic boulevard, which connects the lakefront and Museum Campus to the new University Village, the redeveloped ABLA Homes, the Illinois Medical District and points west.

Roosevelt Road will be an urban contemporary shopping district that will meet demand for large-scale retail while respecting the city's character. Due to the area's excellent expressway access, stores west of the river will attract customers not only from downtown but also from throughout the city.

To keep the area compact and walkable, the spatial arrangement will be more vertical than that of the typical auto-dominated retail district. Retail buildings will be built out to the sidewalk with parking below or behind. Entries and display windows will face the sidewalk, bringing activity and light to the sidewalk. High quality materials will be used on facades. Upper floors may include housing and office. Front doors of all buildings should face Roosevelt Road.

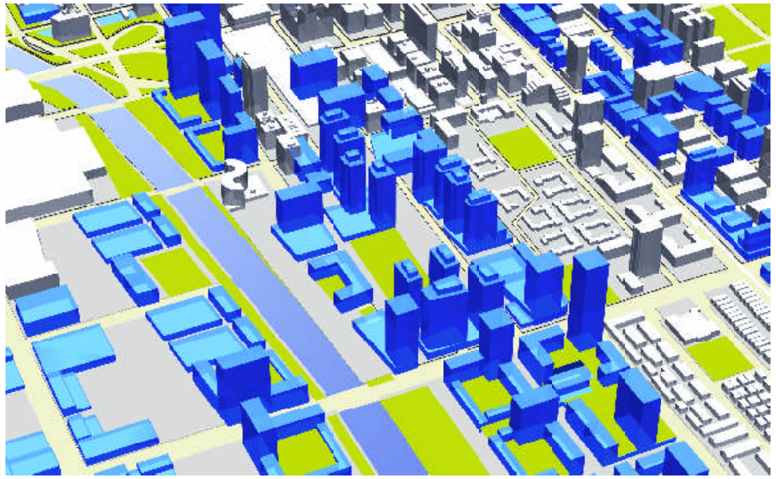


Figure 5.24
Proposed new high density residential neighborhood north of Roosevelt Road and east of the Chicago River

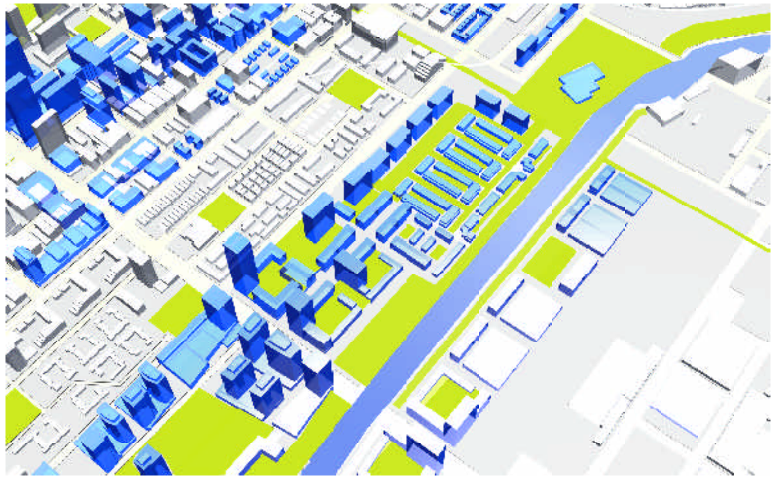


Figure 5.25
Proposed new residential neighborhood south of Roosevelt Road along the River

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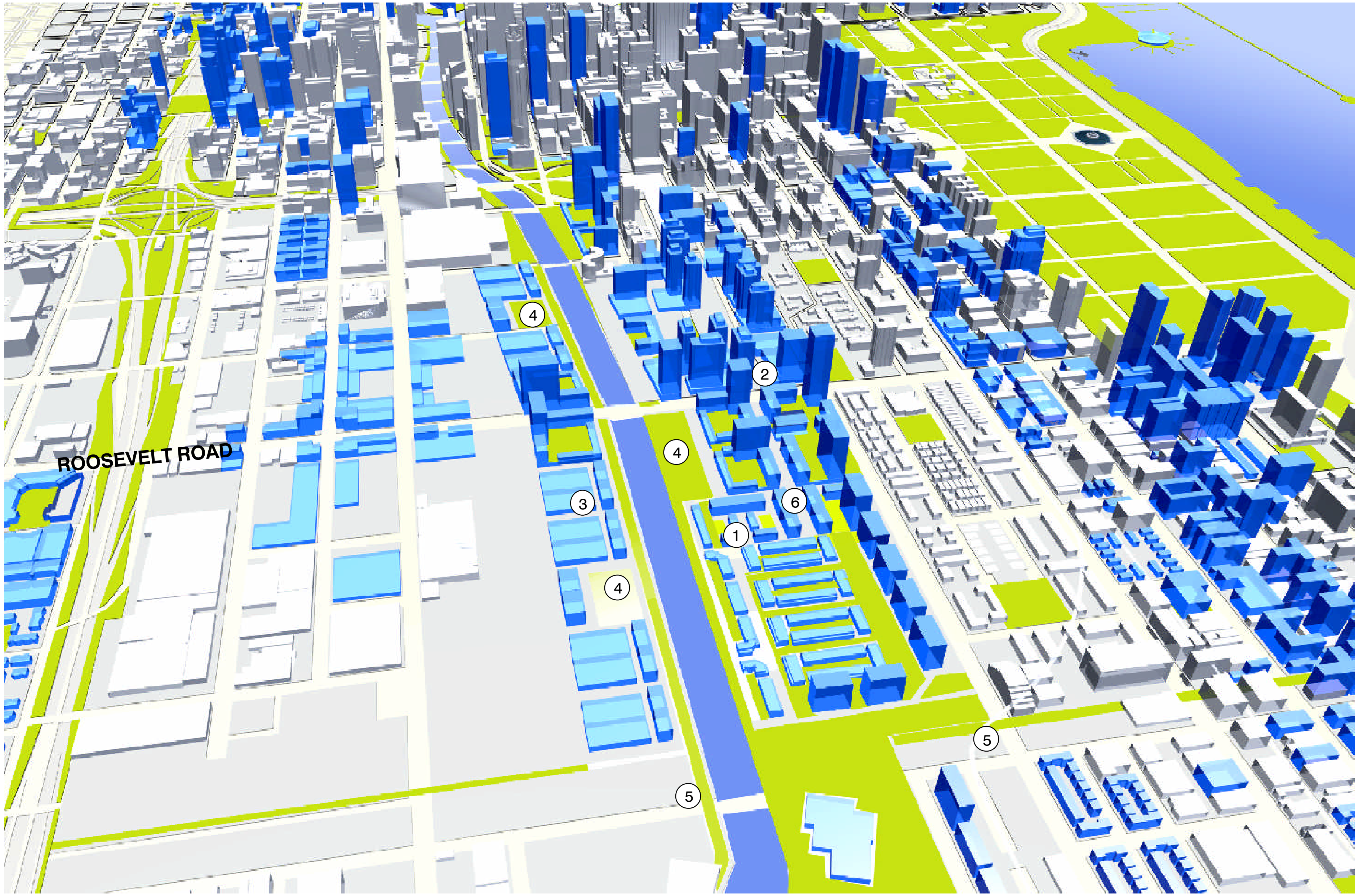
Figure 5.26
The South River Corridor

A new generation of livable neighborhoods and public open spaces will be created in the South River Corridor.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
1. New South River Corridor neighborhoods east of the River
2. Higher density mixed-use development at Roosevelt Road
3. Potential industrial, distribution or warehousing development west of the Chicago River
4. New system of riverfront open spaces, parks, and riverwalk
5. Re-use the St. Charles Airline as a greenway or transit right of way.
6. Extend Wentworth Street north to join Wells Street.



The New South River Neighborhoods

In a dramatic reversal of its history as derelict rail yards, the river's edge south of Congress Parkway will become a grand "river promenade". It will draw people to the river and complete a missing link in the riverwalk between Congress Parkway and Ping Tom Park. The street grid will be extended in the South Loop and Near South, creating links to new neighborhoods from the downtown.

A connection along the Wells Street and Wentworth Avenue rights-of-way will function as a neighborhood connector, with Wentworth extended to the north to meet Wells Street at a point south of Roosevelt Road.

New bridges over the Chicago River at Taylor, Polk and/or 16th Streets will improve east-west access and circulation. The St. Charles Airline will be converted to a greenway with bike and walking trails that link the river and neighborhoods further west to the lakefront.

New residential neighborhoods will emerge both north and south of Roosevelt Road that are a 5 to 10 minute walk to the Central Area and are served by Roosevelt Road transit and retail. A variety of residential densities will be encouraged, with higher densities where the corridor intersects with Roosevelt Road. The massing and scale of river edge development to the south of Roosevelt road will be lower to avoid creating a canyon effect.

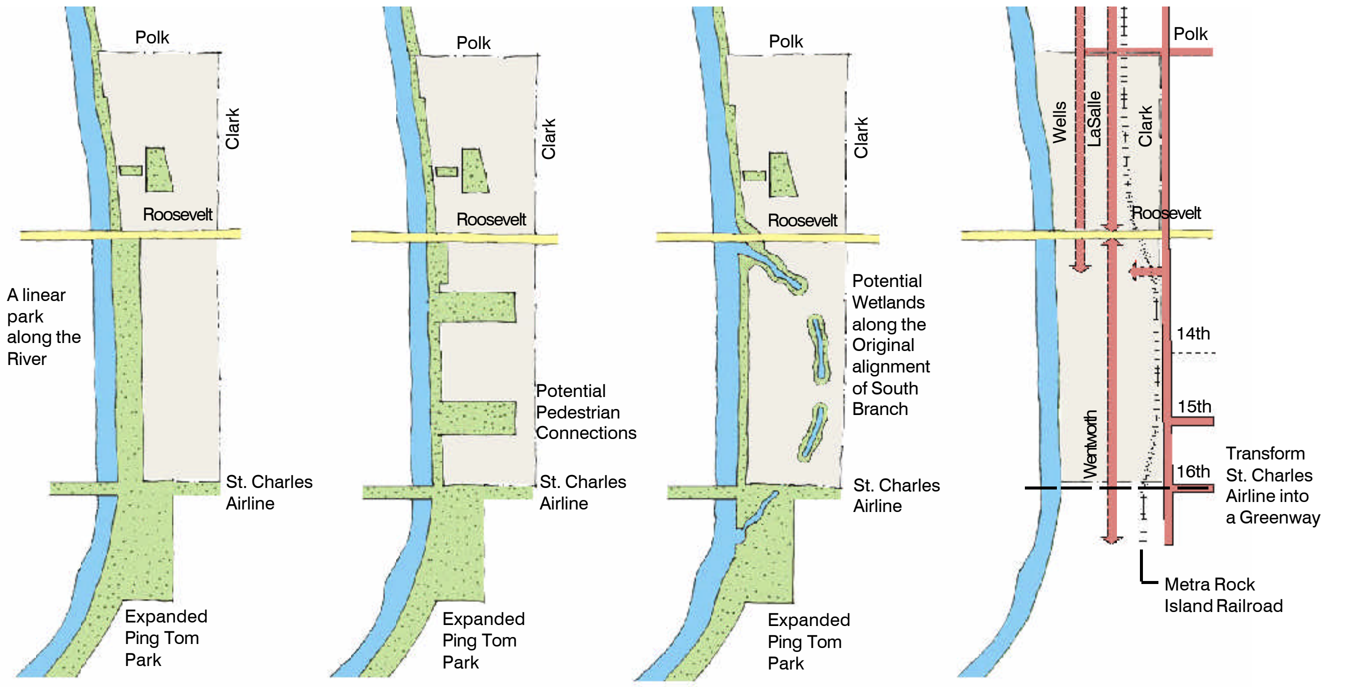
Neighborhoods and Special Places

East of the Michigan – Wabash –State corridor are the emerging neighborhoods of Central Station and Prairie Avenue.

The *Prairie Avenue Historic District and Museums* will continue to be cultural destinations and to serve as an anchor for a revitalized residential neighborhood. Lower building heights along Prairie Avenue, 18th Street and Cullerton Street will reinforce the scale of the residential neighborhood. To preserve the character of the historic district, density surrounding the historic district will be lower, with higher density development along the development corridors.

West of the Michigan – Wabash – State Corridor the renovation and redevelopment of new mixed-income communities will be completed at the *Hilliard and Ickes Homes* at Cermak Road and State Street in the south of the district. This redevelopment will complement the new Chicago Teacher's Academy.

Chinatown will continue to thrive as a distinctive residential community and a long-standing visitor destination. The neighborhood's development community will create new housing, including single-family homes, townhomes and senior housing. The revamped Cermak Road Corridor will encourage more conventioneers and visitors to travel from McCormick Place to Chinatown.


Polk
Clark
Roosevelt
A linear park along the River
St. Charles Airline
Expanded Ping Tom Park
Polk
Clark
Roosevelt
Potential Pedestrian Connections
St. Charles Airline
Expanded Ping Tom Park
Polk
Clark
Roosevelt
Potential Wetlands along the Original alignment of South Branch
St. Charles Airline
Expanded Ping Tom Park
Polk
Wells
LaSalle
Clark
Roosevelt
14th
15th
16th
Wentworth
Transform St. Charles Airline into a Greenway
Metra Rock Island Railroad

Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Street Framework

Figure 5.27

These three illustrations indicate some of the open space factors to consider as part of the redevelopment of riverfront properties into new residential communities. The foundation for all these open space ideas is continuous river-edge open space connecting to larger public open spaces and, ultimately, to an expanded Ping Tom Park. Options under consideration in these illustrations are:

- Strategy 1: Create a significant open space setback from the river's edge that will offer continuous public access.
- Strategy 2: Develop open spaces extending east from the river that link the neighborhood to the riverfront.
- Strategy 3: Reflect the site's history and incorporate the natural bend in the river as an open space feature.

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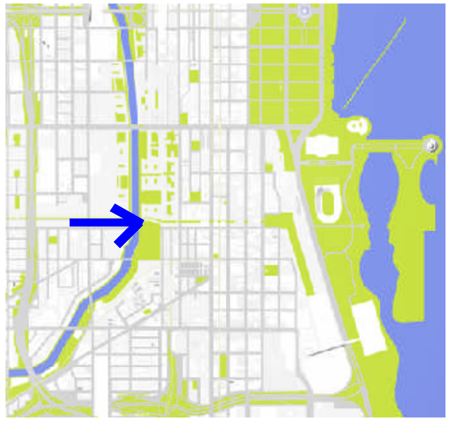

Figure 5.28
Location and direction of views.

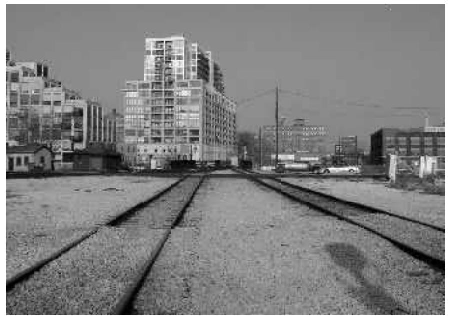

Figure 5.29
St. Charles Airline today

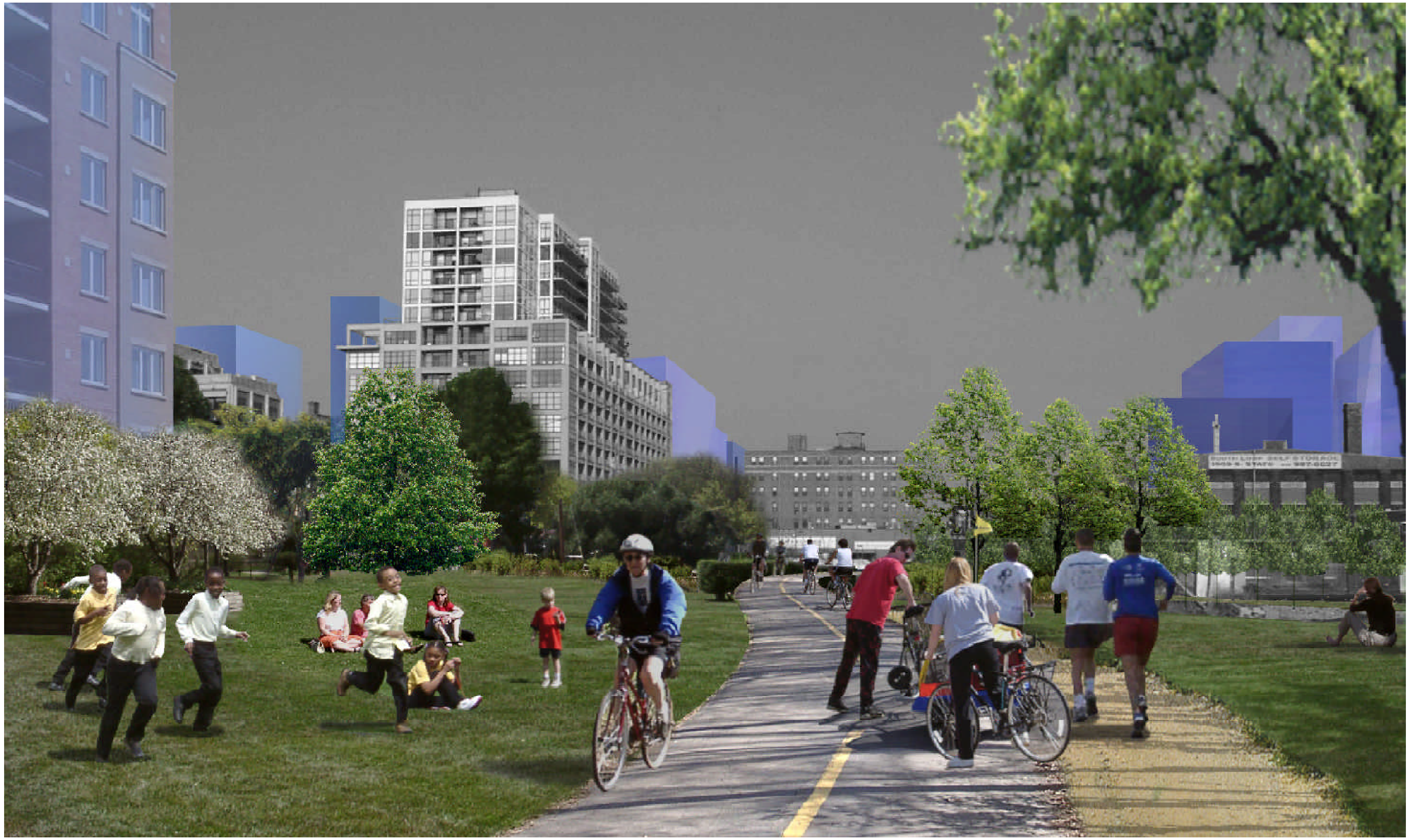

Figure 5.30
The St. Charles Airline in 2020 will be a landscaped pedestrian and bike way connecting the South River neighborhoods to the Lakefront.

West of the Chicago River, back-office, light industrial, and distribution uses will remain in the blocks north and south of Roosevelt Road. Reliant on highway access and good circulation on local roadways, these businesses will continue to be compatible neighbors to new retailers.

The Near South includes the eastern corner of the *Pilsen Industrial Corridor* and neighborhood, south of 16th Street between Halsted and the Chicago River. This is primarily an industrial area, and along with the adjoining larger Pilsen Industrial Corridor provides important distribution, service and back office support to the Central Area. Connections between the residential portions of Pilsen, which provide affordable family housing and distinctive neighborhood restaurants and retail, and other parts of the Near South and the Lakefront will be enhanced with the redevelopment of the St. Charles Airline. See below, "Adjoining areas", for further discussion of the Pilsen neighborhood.

Transportation Recommendations

Existing transportation facilities will be upgraded, and new facilities will be developed to respond to the growing residential base and retail activities in the South Loop and Near South Side.

- Extended east-west and north-south streets on the current grid pattern will provide connections and circulation to and through the area.
- The extension of Wells Street south of Roosevelt Road to Wentworth Avenue (which will be extended north from Cermak Road) will connect the emerging neighborhoods along the east bank of the Chicago River's South Branch.
- New bridges over the Chicago River at Polk, Taylor and/or 16th Streets will increase east-west connections
- Key pedestrian streets including State, Michigan, Wabash, Polk, Harrison and 18th Streets will be improved.
- With construction of the Circle Line, a new intermodal station will be created connecting the CTA red and orange lines with Metra's southwest line.
- A new green line station near Cermak Road will improve access to McCormick Place, Chinatown and Motor Row.

Open Space Recommendations

The development of new open spaces and the expansion of existing parks will provide a comprehensive system of open space amenities for local residents, employees, and tourists. Various types of open spaces will be developed, from parks and plazas to green streets and riverwalks. Connections to nearby open space amenities such as Grant Park and the Lakefront will be improved.

- The improvement of the Chicago River corridor will provide greater pedestrian access to open spaces and communities along the river.
- River setbacks will vary to create a variety of interesting public and open spaces.
- Larger open spaces will be focused where the Chicago River meets major streets, at Congress Parkway, Roosevelt Road and 18th Street.
- More tranquil, natural spaces can be created with the introduction of wetlands in the former bed of the Chicago River.
- Ping Tom Park will expand to include a soccer field, ball fields, and a fieldhouse, as well as a possible boat launch under the 18th Street Bridge. These new recreational facilities will serve local residents, and the expanded park will be a crucial element in the riverfront open space system.
- Improved access to the lakefront will be facilitated by a new connection over Lakeshore Drive at 18th Street.
- The St. Charles Airline will be redeveloped as a greenway, giving pedestrians and cyclists access from the river directly to the lakefront.
- Improvements to Grant Park will include:
    - An increase in amenities such as playgrounds to serve young families.
    - A deck over the Metra tracks at 9th Street will provide a location for athletic fields.
- New neighborhood parks will be developed at Federal and 24th Street, Central Station and Franklin Point.
- A new Campus Park on State Street near Congress will serve educational institutions.
- A new three-acre park in the LaSalle Park Planned Development at Wells and Taylor Streets will anchor new developments nearby.
- A system of landscaped pedestrian ways will be created to provide access to the new parks
- A comprehensive streetscaping system will be implemented.
- Landscaping along the Stevenson and Dan Ryan Expressways will soften their edges and provide green gateways to the Central Area.

Adjoining Areas

Pilsen will continue its long tradition as a place for affordable family housing, bungalows, two and three flats, distinctive local stores and restaurants, neighborhood schools and parks. Careful rehabilitation and infill with new family housing for local residents by local non-profit developers will continue.

The *Pilsen Industrial Corridor* will continue to provide manufacturing and distribution jobs to local residents and to service downtown businesses, the convention industry and the Central Area entertainment and restaurant sector.

The University Village neighborhood surrounding the University of Illinois will expand, with new retail and residential development adjacent to the University campus.

CHAPTER 6

Implementation

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Overview

Public investment decisions made today will affect Chicago's prosperity for decades to come

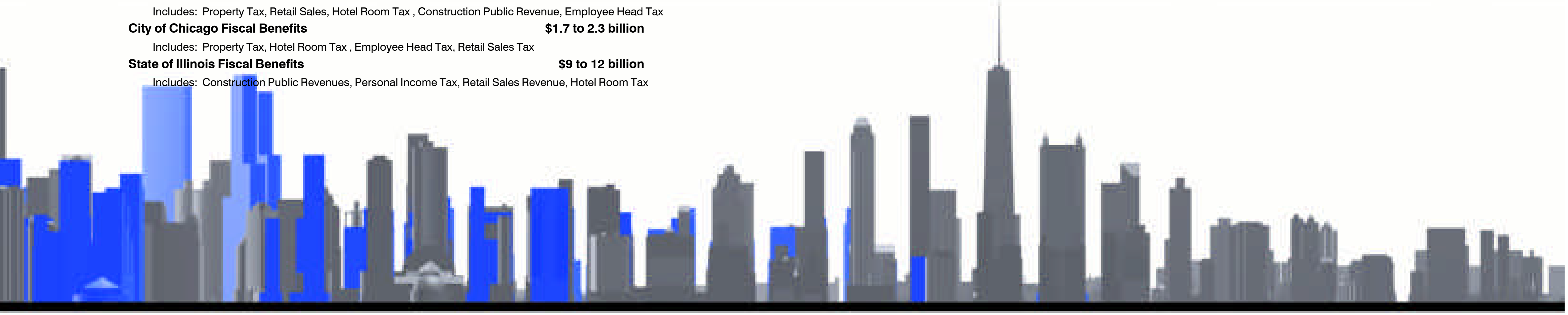
The Central Area’s growth over the past 20 years did not occur spontaneously. Rather, it was the result of sound planning, aggressive economic development efforts, and infrastructure investment on the part of both the public and private sectors. Some of these efforts date back generations - the Loop elevated was built in 1897, the Burnham plan appeared in 1909, and most of the present commuter rail system was in place by the 1920’s. Decisions made now will have equally far-reaching impact. Though the time horizon contemplated by this Plan is 2020, it is no exaggeration to say that the groundwork laid today will be the basis of the city's well-being a century hence.

The base and opportunity demand forecasts presented in this Plan reflect the level of investment Chicago is willing to make in its future. If the city makes minimal improvements, no doubt it will continue to grow, but not at the rate that it might have. If the city implements all of the recommendations of this Plan, it will capture a larger share of regional and national growth. The economic impacts to the City of Chicago, the Region and the State of Illinois for both the base and opportunity growth forecasts are significant. The potential impacts over the next 20 years include (stated in 2002 dollars):

Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Economic Benefits	**$534 to 755 billion**
Includes: Operations, Indirect, and Construction Output and Earnings, Increased Property Values	
Chicago MSA Fiscal Benefits	**$10 to 13 billion**
Includes: Property Tax, Retail Sales, Hotel Room Tax , Construction Public Revenue, Employee Head Tax	
City of Chicago Fiscal Benefits	**$1.7 to 2.3 billion**
Includes: Property Tax, Hotel Room Tax , Employee Head Tax, Retail Sales Tax	
State of Illinois Fiscal Benefits	**$9 to 12 billion**
Includes: Construction Public Revenues, Personal Income Tax, Retail Sales Revenue, Hotel Room Tax	

It is important to understand the degree to which the components of this Plan are interrelated and depend on one another for their success. There is little point in upzoning the West Loop if workers do not have an efficient way to get to their jobs. Downtown residential neighborhoods will not continue to thrive if viable commercial corridors are not established providing convenient access to goods and services. If the city does not provide its workers, residents, and visitors with the beauty and amenity that greenery and open space afford, they will go someplace that does.

This document lays out an ambitious twenty-year program for Chicago's Central Area. An equally ambitious implementation strategy will be required to bring it to fruition. The scale of needed investment is formidable. Implementation must be carefully phased, with public projects coming online in coordination with the private investment they support. The timing must take into account the long lead times required by government capital funding cycles. As the rebuilding of Wacker Drive demonstrated, these often require a five-year span from initial commitment of funds through project completion.



Implementation Tools

The City's zoning ordinance is its key regulatory tool, and is used to direct the size, character, use, and location of development throughout the city. Chicago is currently rewriting its zoning ordinance. A new set of zoning classifications is being designed specifically to address needs within the Central Area planning district.

The public infrastructure improvements proposed in the plan will require substantial and sustained capital investment by the public sector. Traditional sources of revenue will continue to be employed, including federal and state grants, property and sales taxes, and use of the City's bonding authority. But given the massive scale of the proposed capital investment, new sources of revenue must be identified.

Each of these tools will come into play in varying degree for each of the proposed initiatives. Zoning will play a greater role in implementing some aspects of the Plan, while the availability of capital will be more crucial for others. The mix of tools for implementing each of the plan's guiding themes is detailed in the following pages.

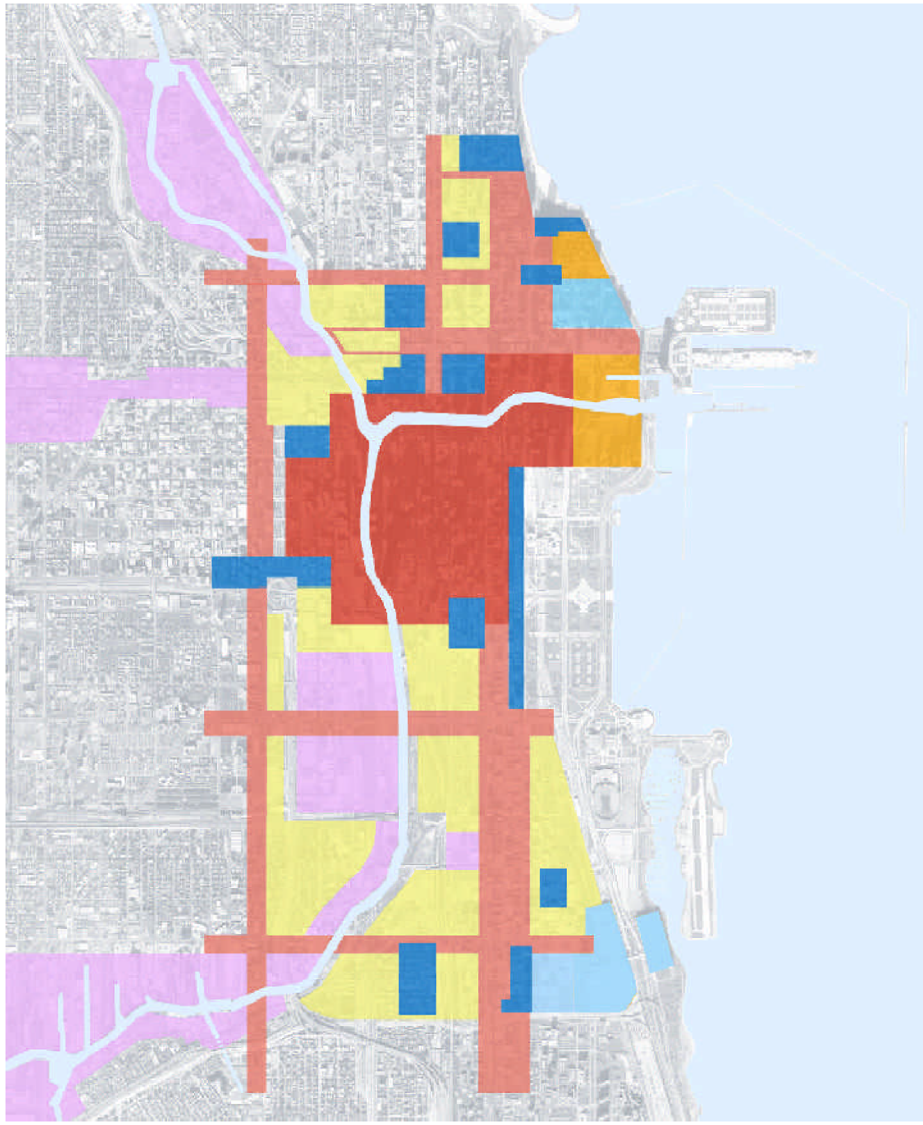


Figure 6.2
Conceptual Framework for Zoning in the Central Area

- 🟥 The Expanded Loop
- 🟥 High Density Corridors
- 🟧 High Density Residential
- 🟨 Residential
- 🟪 Industrial Districts and Corridors
- 🟦 Landmark Districts and Character Areas
- 🟦 Special Areas - Northwestern Hospital and McCormick Place

Development Controls

Zoning will direct and shape development

Key Recommendations

- Ensure sustained employment growth by providing an adequate land supply for high-density office within walking distance of the existing office core and around enhanced transit facilities.
- The major location for the highest density development should be the Central and West Loop. Secondary locations for high and mid-density development are specific mixed-use corridors.
- Protect and enhance the character of historic areas, special character districts and residential neighborhoods.
- Preserve sufficient industrial land for essential warehousing, distribution and other services to support downtown businesses.
- Enhance the Central Area as an attractive place for people to walk, bicycle, work, live and play by requiring standards for appropriate scale and character, orientation of buildings to streets, appropriate vehicular access, pedestrian-oriented ground floors, well-articulated and transparent facades, landscaping, and by implementing Chicago's Streetscape Guidelines.

Zoning regulation will be the most important factor in directing the type and location of development downtown. The existing ordinance doesn't recognize downtown as a distinctive place, nor does it facilitate development at appropriate locations, consistent with the ideas in this Central Area Plan. The comprehensive rewrite of the zoning ordinance currently underway will create activity districts, development controls and design standards specific to the downtown.

The current zoning district framework divides downtown into four Central Business Districts and three Commercial Districts that represent little more than high-density versions of the neighborhood districts. The revised zoning framework for the Central Area should promote high-intensity, vertically mixed-use districts. In addition to accommodating a full range of uses that contribute to the area's vibrancy, the ordinance should establish standards to implement Central Area plans and policies and achieve economic and development goals. The following four classifications are proposed for the Central Area:

Downtown Core (DC)

A Downtown Core classification would reflect the expanded loop identified in the plan. Uses should be oriented to commercial and office development and provide for the highest density permitted in the city of Chicago. The West Loop and selected other areas intended for incorporation into the office core should be designated DC.

Downtown Mixed-Use (DX)

A Downtown Mixed Use district would reflect the corridors of vertically-stacked mixed uses radiating from the office core. Within them, a rich mix of complementary uses would be encouraged, including hotels, meeting and convention facilities, retailing, residential, and cultural and entertainment uses. In general, permissible density would be high (although less so than in DC districts), graduating down where the DX district adjoined a lower-density residential district.

Downtown Residential (DR)

A Downtown Residential District would reflect the higher density residential neighborhoods within the Central Area. Permissible density would vary depending on the predominant housing type envisioned for a particular district.

Downtown Service (DS)

The industrial and commercial services areas in the Central Area should be designated "downtown service" zones. The DS classification would ensure the survival of support and back-office functions that are crucial to the health of downtown businesses.

Historic Preservation will be a major priority

Chicago's world-renowned architectural heritage contributes immeasurably to the Central Area's character and quality of life. The City will continue to be proactive in protecting and designating landmarks, creating incentives for preservation, and educating owners about the benefits of preserving historic buildings.

Key Recommendations

- Protect the currently designated landmark buildings and districts in the Central Area.
- Continue to designate the Central Area's most important landmark buildings and districts.
- Protect significant buildings and districts that have been identified on the City's historic resources survey, are under study as potential landmarks, or are on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Expand incentives to motivate owners to preserve and maintain historic buildings.
- Educate building owners about the benefits of preservation.

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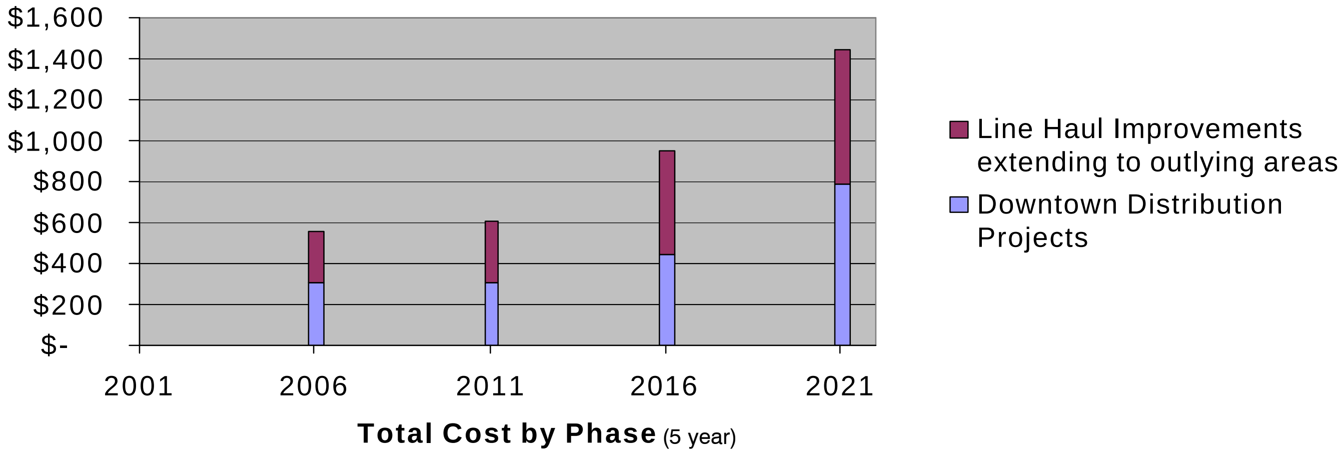
Table 6.1
Central Area Transportation Projects
Estimated Capital Cost by End Date (in $Ms)

The total cost of transportation improvements over 20 years will be between $2.25 and $3.5 billion in capital investment. This is in addition to the $7 billion needed for regional improvements to meet current demand for service.



Transportation

New transportation facilities will require new sources of revenue

The transportation plan for the Central Area requires major new systems and facilities to support growth. While zoning can help to promote an accessible Central Area, these new systems will require major new sources of capital funds.

Need vs. Available Funding

Table 4.1 provides order-of-magnitude costs for the transportation projects proposed in this Plan, broken out by phase. Note that costs are "back-loaded" - the largest expenses occur in later years, reflecting a desire to link capital expenditures to increases in the tax base. The phasing also takes into consideration the long lead times needed to fund and build major facilities such as the West Loop Transportation Center.

Transportation is not the only infrastructure need requiring public funding. Additional investment in police and fire facilities, water distribution, street and sidewalk reconstruction, etc., will also be required. However, increased tax receipts from existing sources due to tax base growth are expected to be sufficient to cover such costs. That is not the case for transportation.

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) estimate that $7 billion will be needed region-wide between 2003 and 2020 to meet the current level of demand. In addition to this $7 billion, the base scenario for Central Area growth would require about $2.25 billion in additional transportation capital investment. The opportunity scenario would require and additional $3.25 billion.

Current sources of funds fall far short of these needs. Transportation planners estimate that only $5 billion in funds from various sources will be available to contribute to the $7 billion needed to meet current demand in the region, creating a funding gap of $2 billion even before factoring in the additional demand generated by growth. With Central Area growth factored in, the projected gap is 4.6 billion. To reduce this $4-6 billion funding gap, three steps are important:

- Reauthorize existing federal and state funding programs
- Explore new Central Area funding sources
- Refine priorities

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Federal and State Funding Programs

Like all U.S. cities, Chicago relies on state and federal sources for the majority of its transportation funds. In 2001, the Regional Transportation Authority received 56% of its capital funds from the federal government, while 36% came from the State of Illinois. At the federal level, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) has been a significant source of funds, providing 80% of capital costs against a 20% local match. This program will expire in 2003. Within the state, Illinois FIRST and the Illinois Series "B" bond program have been the major funding sources. Both programs are designed, in part, to satisfy the local matching requirement. Illinois FIRST is due to expire in 2004. The Series "B" program is subject to annual appropriation by the Illinois General Assembly.

Reauthorization of these programs is an important first step. The capital need forecast for transportation in the Central Area is many times what has been funded in the past. The City and its representatives in Congress and the General Assembly must persuade the federal and state governments that increasing funding for existing programs and creating new programs for the 21st century is key for the survival of Chicago and all of America's cities and for the American economy to remain competitive globally.

Local Central Area Funding Sources

Sources in this category include Tax-Increment Financing (TIF), Special Service Areas (SSAs). An additional funding source could be realized by capturing a percentage of the property taxes generated by new office growth.

The Central Loop TIF District is the largest and most successful of Chicago's 120 TIF districts. It has generated over $300 million for investment since 1990. It has been used for major transportation projects downtown, ranging from the Randolph/Washington subway station renovation to bridge improvements on Lower Wacker Drive. However, this TIF is unlikely to be a major source for funding new projects. The program is due to expire in 2007, and most of the remaining increment has been committed. The district has also largely succeeded in eliminating blight within its boundaries, leaving little possibility of establishing a new district.

Fourteen other TIF districts exist within the boundaries of the Central Area. Of these, four - Chicago/Kingsbury, River West, Near South, and Canal/Congress - are structured to permit funding of transportation. But the amount of increment generated within these districts is limited, so they would not be major sources of revenue.

Special Service Areas (SSAs) are a second possible local mechanism. These special taxing authorities are approved by local property holders who agree to a maximum additional tax levy of 0.175% of their equalized assessed valuation (EAV) to support special projects. The potential revenue from this source was estimated for the existing commercial and industrial properties in the Central Area. At a base property tax rate of 9.252%, this source could generate as much as $155 million in bond proceeds over 20 years. If the permissible tax levy were raised to, for example, 0.8%, the resultant revenues could reach $675 million under the growth scenario.

Several policy issues arise with regard to the use of SSAs. Would funds generated by an SSA be usable strictly for transportation or could they be used for other programs? Should an SSA include residential property? How do we ensure that special levy will not affect competitiveness of the Central Area office market? All of these factors will need to be carefully weighed before an SSA can be introduced.

Office property taxes are other potential sources of funds for Central Area transportation enhancements. The City could direct a portion of the taxes generated by new office development to a downtown transportation enterprise fund. Similar in concept to a TIF, this would require no net increase in taxes, merely the redirection of property tax increment to a specific geographic area and a specific use. If 5% of new office property taxes were segregated in this way, the fund could generate up to $19 million in bond proceeds over 20 years. Segregating 30% of office property taxes would provide up to $115 million.

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Open Space

Creating new open space will also require new revenue sources

The high cost and relative scarcity of land will continue to present a barrier to large-scale development of open space in the Central Area. The City must explore new ways of acquiring and developing open space. A combination of approaches will be employed:

- Use publicly owned land creatively
- Increase the open space impact fee in the Central Area
- Negotiate new park land in planned developments
- Capitalize on the 30-foot river setback

Publicly Owned Land

Through its campus parks program, the City seeks to develop open space adjacent to public facilities such as schools and libraries. This puts open space where younger users congregate. It also makes the most of publicly owned land, reducing capital and operating costs. Within the Central Area, campus parks are planned for a new school: the Lake Shore East development along the river east of Michigan Avenue.

The City must also look for park sites in unorthodox locations, and create land where it currently doesn't exist. Such out-of-the-way spots include land beneath the elevated Green Line tracks and air rights over the expressways. New open space could be created in the West Loop by decking over a portion of the expressway without ramps just north and south of Monroe Street. This new open space would help to break down existing barriers while helping to meet demand for park land.

Open Space Impact Fee

Under the zoning ordinance, new residential development must contribute to the creation of open space and recreational facilities required to serve new residents, either through direct land donations or cash contributions to a dedicated fund. The requirement applies to all new residential development and rehabilitation that creates additional dwelling units. Replacement housing which does not increase the existing number of dwelling units is exempt from the fee.

The formula currently used to calculate the open space impact fee is based on city-wide land values. In the Central Area, land acquisition costs are much higher. A reasonable approach would be to modify the formula for downtown projects to reflect the higher cost of obtaining downtown land.

Open Space in Planned Developments

The City negotiates improvements for larger developments downtown through the planned development process. An important element of this process is the provision of open space, particularly for projects involving residential use. The planned development process has resulted in a number of significant additions to the Central Area's open space inventory, and will continue to be an important tool.

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Environmental Commitment

Green initiatives will enhance Central Area energy efficiency and improve environmental quality during the coming era of growth

Promoting public transit and advancing open space and landscaping are important tools for environmental health. In addition, Chicago's approach to ensuring environmental quality is three-pronged: it seeks to reduce the level of noxious emissions, restore areas that have suffered past degradation, and ensure reliable production and distribution of electric power through management of the Commonwealth Edison franchise. Within the Central Area, the Chicago Department of Environment (DOE) is advancing several initiatives to achieve those ends.

Controlling Emissions - Air Quality

In an urban area, changes in land cover alter local climate and air quality, in part by elevating the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx), two of the key ozone precursors. Especially during the summer, dark colored pavements, rooftops and other surfaces absorb, trap and radiate heat. These dark surfaces make up approximately 48% of Chicago's landscape. More than 60% of Chicago's rooftops are dark.

The result is an "urban heat island" with temperatures averaging 6 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit higher than rural temperatures. This increase not only results in higher energy use for cooling buildings, but also causes pollution-creating ground level ozone.

Chicago's Urban Heat Island Initiative is designed to ameliorate the effects of dark surfaces and reduce pollution by: (1) using alternative paving, (2) constructing light-colored roofs, (3) using alternative energy sources, (4) increasing green space, and (5) installing rooftop gardens. DOE is not only encouraging business and homeowners to use these techniques but also is implementing them itself. One example is the rooftop garden on City Hall. In addition, Chicago will pursue Cities for Clean Air Partnership goals to cut emission of greenhouse gases, and safeguard human health as well as local fauna and habitats.

Managing the Energy Supply

Distributed Generation: Distributed generation, the use of small-scale power generation technologies located on-site or close to the demand being served, is an important tool for energy efficiency. Energy users and suppliers can thereby reduce their reliance on the electric grid, increasing energy security, reliability, efficiency and cost and reducing overall emissions.

The Chicago Industrial Energy Plan Project has established a government and industry cooperative to identify strategic industrial locations that will maximize the benefit of integrated industrial distributed generation.

The project is guided by a Steering Committee consisting of industry leaders, local electric and gas utilities, city and state officials, engineering companies, equipment manufacturers and energy project developers.

Cogeneration: Cogeneration is a highly efficient means of generating heat and electric power at the same time from the same energy source. Displacing fossil fuel combustion with heat that would normally be wasted in the process of power generation, it reaches efficiencies that triple or even quadruple conventional power generation. Cogeneration is cost-effective and has been in use since the 19th century. It accounts for well over half of new power plant capacity in North America in the last decade. In northern Europe and increasingly in North America, cogeneration is at the heart of district heating and cooling systems.

Chicago's Trigen/Peoples District Energy Center at McCormick Place is an example of a cogeneration user. Instead of using separate energy-consuming processes for producing steam and electricity, the company produces both at once. A machine that burns natural gas can run a turbine to produce electricity, while the waste heat can be used to make steam.

DOE promotes cogeneration facilities that distribute steam and electricity to other facilities through district heating and cooling programs. A central distribution center would cogenerate steam and electricity, then distribute steam for heat and use the electricity to chill water, which would be piped out to cool buildings.

District Heating and Cooling: District heating and cooling is an environmentally sound technology for providing heating and possibly other forms of energy from a central plant to multiple users.

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Chicago's district cooling system is run by Exelon Thermal. It uses five centrally located plants to produce chilled water and then distributes the water through pipes to cool nearby buildings:

- South State Street and East Adams Street
- South Franklin Street and West Congress Parkway (main plant)
- East Randolph Street and North Columbus Drive
- Merchandise Mart Building
- 100-150 South Wacker Drive

Additional facilities are planned.

District energy can save money for users, conserve resources, reduce pollution, and open up options for flexible and sustainable energy solutions in the future. District energy has a number of advantages over energy systems that serve only one user:

- Central plants are more efficient than multiple small plants, so energy consumption is reduced and operation and maintenance costs are lowered.
- Central plants have almost zero emissions whereas traditional electric generation is one of the most significant sources of pollution in Chicago.
- District energy removes combustion equipment from buildings, saving space in the buildings, and removing a source of indoor air quality contamination.
- District energy systems can be flexible-fueled, which means they can burn whatever fuel is most economical and/or environmentally sound at the time.
- District energy systems present an opportunity for cogeneration.

DOE is working to establish cogeneration district heating and cooling sites city wide.

In addition to these tools, Chicago’s Energy Management Plan calls for the City to:

- Promote renewable energy
- Install solar panels on public buildings and encourage private owners to do the same.
- Promote rehabilitation of public and private buildings to make them more energy efficient.
- Encourage energy efficiency in residential development through the “green homes” initiative.
- Use energy efficient light bulbs in street lights and traffic signals.

Green Design

Chicago is adopting the nationally recognized “Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design” (LEED) Green Building Rating System and will examine opportunities to create incentives to promote construction and rehabilitation that meets LEED standards. These standards promote construction that will:

- Reduce the impacts of natural resource consumption.
- Create healthy indoor environments.
- Safeguard water and water efficiency.
- Be energy efficient and use renewable energy.

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Task Force Summaries

Introduction

In June 2000, the Department of Planning and Development began a bold plan for Chicago's Central Area. The planning process has been guided by a Steering Committee comprised of leaders from the business, government, and civic sectors. A key role of the Steering Committee is to review vision, policy, and project recommendations that emerged from Task Forces organized around seven key areas:

- **Office**
- **Residential**
- **Retail**
- **Tourism**
- **Culture and Education**
- **Transportation**
- **Urban Design**

The task forces included over 120 experts and opinion leaders who are well versed in the state of downtown development.

This chapter presents the task forces' assessments of the key challenges and opportunities facing the Central Area.

Recommendations Emerging Across Task Forces

The Civic Realm

- Expand the Central Area's Open Space system to include the Chicago River Corridor and new plazas, lakefront and neighborhood parks, and high-quality streetscapes.
- Develop the Chicago River Corridor as a shared amenity with public access, promenades, parks, and high-quality mixed-use buildings.
- Stimulate innovative design to reaffirm Chicago's reputation as a leader in great urban architecture.
- Support the growth and vibrancy of cultural and educational institutions to enrich life downtown.
- Add new public schools in response to actual demand. Education can be provided through innovative programming within existing cultural institutions and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings.
- Federal, state, and county funding should be focused on improving the urban environment, transit, leisure and convention tourism, and education in Chicago.

Land Use and Districts

- Preserve and strengthen the distinctive character of unique buildings and districts, including historic buildings and districts.
- Extend the office core into the West Loop to better utilize the existing infrastructure, major commuter rail stations, highway access and availability of development parcels.
- Direct and strengthen residential neighborhoods around the core office district.
- Emphasize office development within the West Loop, limiting residential development.
- Develop clear land use priorities for the development of large land parcels and rail yards
- Emphasize public access to the Chicago River, particularly in the Southwest Loop.
- Create a focused retail strategy for commercial streets that targets places for neighborhood, downtown, and contemporary retail.
- Preserve industrial development within Planned Manufacturing Districts and designated industrial corridors.
- Support transit-oriented development within neighborhoods and business districts.

Transportation and Access

- Improve downtown-to-airport connections.
- Improve east - west connections in the Central Area south of Congress Parkway.
- Reconnect the north and south districts of the Central Area across Congress Parkway.
- Relate density of development to availability of transit.
- Support convenient public transit to and within the Central Area.
- Improve way-finding and connections between regional rail, rapid transit and bus systems, and available parking.
- Improve signage and programs to help residents and visitors navigate downtown.

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Office Task Force

Chicago's downtown office district has many attributes that point to a strong future

- Its prominence as a share of the total metropolitan office inventory
- The large and growing residential presence in the Central Area
- The existence of other complimentary land uses including hotels, convention facilities, retail, cultural institutions, and institutions of higher education
- A good public transit and system

It faces challenges, at the same time, including:

- A significant part of downtown Chicago's employment base is tied to the exchanges, institutions with an uncertain future
- Due to cumbersome and unpredictable zoning and building permit processes, costs associated with construction exceed those in the suburbs
- The cost of doing business in Chicago exceeds that of the suburbs because of higher taxes and labor rates, while certain services are inferior, particularly power

Conclusions

- Parts of the downtown make sense for development of high-density office, given proximity to regional transportation hubs, other high-density office, and locational magnets like the courts and other government buildings.
- The West Loop, from Randolph on the north, Van Buren on the south, east to the River and west to the Expressway, is a logical location for office growth.
- Parts of the downtown are less appropriate for high-density office development as it can strain infrastructure and put pressure on other land uses that are important.
- Eliminate impediments to the downtown's competitiveness as an office location:
  - streamline the building permit process
  - provide telecommunications infrastructure coordination through projects like Civicnet
  - continue efforts to upgrade the Chicago public schools
  - improve public transit to the airports and circulation around the Central Area
  - encourage the provision of high-quality electricity in sufficient quantity to meet future demand.
- Encourage infrastructure investments in the Central Area, particularly mass transit improvements, that will allow the Central Area office market to capture 50% of regional demand for new space.

Residential Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- Develop downtown neighborhoods as safe and healthy places to live, with sufficient light within dwelling units, parks and green space, and attractive streetscapes.
- Provide a broad range of housing options in the downtown market for young workers, students, empty nesters, families, and the elderly.
- Promote affordable housing through the redevelopment of public housing, City of Chicago affordable housing programs and creative uses of TIF funds.
- Provide 100% accessible public infrastructure.
- Encourage mixed uses that support 24-hour, viable urban districts where appropriate.
- Direct high-density residential development near high-capacity streets and transportation facilities.
- Outside the core office district, develop the Chicago River as a vibrant, predominantly residential, mixed-use spine with continuous access to waterways, parks and plazas, and restaurants.
- Create a rich pedestrian experience, mixing historic character with new architecture in residential areas.
- Preserve significant historic buildings for a variety of neighborhood uses.
- Concentrate convenient retail development along targeted streets and intersections to meet residents' daily needs.
- Support market-driven demand as it develops.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Determine the appropriate density, mix and location of new residential development.
- Develop clear zoning regulations to achieve the City's vision.
- Develop housing over the railyards on the west side of the river, south of Congress.
- Explore intermodal transportation in the Central Area (NEV).
- Encourage residential uses in character districts that are already low-rise.
- Organize auto and truck access during rush hours.
- Provide parking to meet real needs and include parking area in FAR requirements.
- Avoid overly dense development resulting from too much use of zoning bonuses on a single block.
- Provide tax credits and development transfer rights to landmarks and property improvements that benefit the public.
- Focus family residential development on the outer edges of the Central Area, where land is more affordable and available.
- Locate retail within targeted areas rather than requiring it in all new development.
- Explore the establishment of a "light manufacturing zone" for industry that would be compatible with residential development.

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Residential Task Force (continued)

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Build housing over the railroad tracks on the west side of the river.
- Re-design downtown public schools: offer after school programs, encourage “schools without walls” concept by offering classes at cultural institutions and other sites.
- Encourage downtown residents to use New Urban Vehicles, including electric or more compact cars.

Retail Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- The increasing aggregate buying power in the Central Area is increasing the demand for retail. The demand comes from a growing number of office workers, visitors, and residents.
- Retail needs a safe and secure environment. It needs to be accessible by foot, car, and public transit.
- A model is needed to determine how retailers’ physical requirements can fit into the urban pattern of Chicago. Attention needs to be paid to traffic, signage, parking, building materials, and physical design.
- Retail can be used to support “places” such as parks, plazas, and the Chicago River Corridor by helping provide a program for such spaces.
- More after-work venues will keep workers and students downtown in the evenings to support local retailers.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- What are priorities for the Central Area Retail Plan?
- What are the planning implications, and economic benefits, of office worker, resident, and visitor markets?
- What opportunities are created, and how can Chicago capitalize on them, for the expansion and diversification of the city’s retail economic base by virtue of the transformations occurring to the South and West Loop districts ? These include the emergence of new residential communities; the potential availability of land formerly used for warehousing, manufacturing, and railroad-related operations; and development investments being made to McCormick Place, the Lakeside Press properties, Chinatown, Bronzeville, University of Illinois, et al.
- Are there any appropriate places for larger “big box” retailers in the expanded Central Area? If so, what guidelines should there be for siting, building design, parking, and delivery access?
- What type of retail development , if any, should be encouraged and discouraged along the Ohio-Ontario corridor?
- Given the proliferation of hotels in the peripheral locations along the river, in Streeterville, and Illinois Center, should future hotels be encouraged closer to existing office and retail concentrations to maximize economic synergy and business visitor convenience?
- Is street congestion having a negative effect on the quality of retail experience for certain market segments?
- Should the City require ground-level retail in all new office buildings or just along targeted streets?
- What kinds of retail are needed in the Theater District?
- Should Block 37 incorporate significant “arrival” space and amenities for transit users?

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Create a Blues/Arts/Incubator Museum District in Motor Row along South Michigan Avenue near McCormick Place that begins to bridge Bronzeville with McCormick Place and the Loop.
- Create after-work experiences tied to transit nodes.
- Include additional visitor experiences along the Chicago River Corridor.
- Create multiple retail nodes that may help reduce traffic congestion and provide services closer to residences, such as in the South Loop area.
- Promote culturally diverse market/fairs for merchandise and food to showcase neighborhood merchants.

Tourism Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- The future health of Chicago’s tourism industry depends on a blend of key components: hotels; attractions/product development; access and circulation; exhibit space; convention/business visitors; family visitors; sustainability; promotion and marketing; and theatres and product development.
- Look to international models for rapid transit. Heathrow to London is fast but costs $25/person.
- Provide “seamless” transportation for visitors, beginning with airport arrival.
- Improve transportation to museums, rail stations, and attractions
- Improve signage at airport and on transit
- Improve motor coach parking, since a full bus yields $33,000 in visitor purchases.

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- Connect downtown to the neighborhoods. Visitors from Europe are used to staying in neighborhoods. (This would be easier if transit were seamless.)
- Build on the “huge” opportunity to link international shoppers to the Central Area
- Develop more attractions around McCormick Place.
- Improve cross marketing opportunities with between the City and State.
- Promote the lakefront outside downtown as a major tourist asset.
- Identify alternative locations for tour boats to relieve crowding of the river and locks.
- Develop and promote weekday visitor attractions to extend stays after big shows.
- Publicize events must well over a year in advance in promotional brochures.
- Encourage economic diversity on North Michigan Avenue in case of a downturn in the economy.
- Improve access to and movement around North Michigan Avenue.
- Emphasize the more efficient use of existing sources of funds rather than the creation of new ones.
- Improve first quarter activities to boost occupancy in Central Area hotels by 15%.
- Encourage the City to continue to pursue mega-events.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Continue to look at third airport opportunities, at Peotone or Gary as, according to a Booz Allen study, O’Hare will run out of capacity in 2018 if the economy continues to grow.
- Determine how to create a $100 million/year fund to build infrastructure.
- Study express trains to Midway and O’Hare with baggage check-in at a downtown location.
- As the West Side is grows, locate family hotels near the train stations.
- Explore new museum concepts, including: transportation; architectural remnant park; maritime; large equipment; high-tech electronics; music using Grammy material stored in New York.
- Look at Passenger Facility Charges to enhance the arrival/departure experience.
- Study the need for a connection between Midway and O’Hare.
- Look at international models to increase tourism, including more multilingual tours and a focus on cultural attractions and natural features.
- Include the tourism industry on decisions involving use of the amusement tax and MPEA dollars.
- Increase the supply of inexpensive long-term remote parking.
- Establish a transportation fund with tourism taxes.
- Determine what entertainment amenities new downtown residents want.
- Determine the best locations for the next 1,000-room hotel. Would it be near McCormick Place?
- Determine the future demand for 1,500 - 2,000- room hotels.
- Assess how to stimulate affordable hotel development and preserve it for families.

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Create a series of islands – possibly as a National Park — to extend the use of the lakefront.
- Redevelop the Franklin Point site as a place for family hotels or an amusement park.
- Make the Chicago Auto Show the product introduction event for national and international automakers to show Chicago to the world.
- Stage events like London’s Chelsea Garden Show in Millennium Park.
- Develop a system of kiosks providing up-to-the-minute visitor information.

Culture and Education Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Downtown institutions can play a stronger role to familiarize children and teens with the resources of the Central Area to make the downtown a tool for urban learning.
- Partnerships with corporations and institutions can strengthen and broaden programs for learning.
- The growing demand for local schools can be met through the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- Support the health and presence of central area educational institutions.
- Encourage downtown institutions to develop programs for life-long learning for all Chicago residents.
- Encourage more efficient use of land through shared and mixed-use facilities.
- Encourage educational institutions and their buildings to reflect and relate to the urban fabric.
- Create a committee of government, businesses, and schools as a communications device to develop new programs. Foster links between government, businesses and schools so Chicago stays “ahead of the curve” in higher education.
- Foster links between businesses and cultural and educational institutions to increase availability of resources to businesses.

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Culture and Education Task Force (continued)

CULTURE

- Elevate Chicago as a regional cultural center. This can help to change attitudes toward the importance of the city overall for the nine million residents of the metropolitan area.
- Make the health of culture a regional issue with more regional contributions (not just property taxes).
- Cultivate the diversity of content and scale of cultural attractions.
- Make art and culture elements a component of mixed-use nodes in the South and South West Loop.
- Locate new museums and cultural places strategically to encourage developing areas.

POP CULTURE

- Encourage new entertainment destinations for central area residents, including the clustering of music clubs and galleries.

THEATER

- Find ways to showcase non-Loop Chicago theaters in appropriately scaled venues.

LIBRARIES

- Create new, smaller libraries using the Chicago Public Library Express model.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- How does the City showcase Chicago artists in infrastructure projects?
- How do we define and expand the importance of public art?
- What is the potential impact of the expansion of non-profit ownership of buildings on the local tax base?

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Create a CPS-supported arts high school in the Central Area.
- Develop a shared preparation and construction facility for theaters and performing arts organizations.
- Develop a shared rehearsal space for performing arts organizations.
- Create a digital Technology Center so technology tools are available to local artists.
- Create a museum incubator, perhaps in the Motor Row buildings.
- Develop new museums such as a Museum of the City of Chicago, Musical Heritage Museum, outdoor museum along the Chicago River, or a Chicago Communities Museum.

Transportation Task Force

Transportation and Access Guiding Principles

- Encourage a balanced transportation system, making it convenient for commuters, shoppers, visitors and others to use transit, walking, biking, taxi or private auto.
- Maintain or increase transit's share of trips as downtown grows.
- Make the transportation system more user friendly through better signs, communication, etc.
- Scale new development to be compatible with transportation capacity
- Maximize the utility of the existing transportation system.
- Maintain or upgrade the existing transportation system to a consistent level.

Preliminary Recommendations

- Improve intermodal connections between transit services, especially rail to bus.
- Use new technologies to improve traffic in the downtown.
- Improve transit access between major rail systems and major activity centers.
- When multiple modes serve a land use, give preference to transit first.
- Expand and modernize the transit system to provide better service from outlying areas to and within the Central Area.
- Extend the street grid network into developing areas, including the South Loop.
- Improve the management, capacity and connectivity of the existing roadway system.
- Devise a parking strategy that is consistent with available street capacity and avoids negative impacts on transit and pedestrians.
- Encourage bike use by improving downtown bicycle facilities.
- Improve downtown's "walkability" by fixing inadequate or missing pedestrian connections.
- Extend the pedway system to high-volume transit stations.
- Improve transit connections between downtown and the airports.
- Provide consistent, even-handed, long-range enforcement of traffic and pedestrian regulations.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Consider zoning solutions to address the spatial mismatch between convention and hotel locations.
- Identify funding sources for transit improvements and expansion.
- Determine appropriate locations and quantity of new parking. In particular, what is the appropriate ratio of parking spaces to dwelling units in new Central Area residential development?
- Define the role of private sector transportation (taxis, water taxis, motorcoaches and motorcoach parking, jitney buses, valet services).
- Develop consistent training and deployment of traffic aides.
- Determine the need for a hierarchy of uses for the Transportation System.

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Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Continue bridge improvements: Wacker Drive Reconstruction; over the Chicago River at Jackson, Monroe; over the Kennedy at Lake, Van Buren, Jackson, Randolph; over Metra/ ICRR at Monroe.
- Develop a transportation circulator system in the Central Area.
- Develop the South Loop Connector, extending Wells and Wentworth streets from 18th Street to Roosevelt Rd.
- Create new street furniture including bus shelters.
- Develop Traffic Signal Interconnect Systems and a Traffic Management System.
- Promote selective reduction of parking meters to improve traffic flow and lower short term parking rates.
- Emphasize shared loading zones and restrict deliveries in peak hours.
- Site driveways to avoid vehicular conflicts with pedestrians.
- Provide charter bus parking.
- Tighten valet parking regulations.
- Engage building management involvement in managing perimeter traffic
- Improve the taxi system, including driver training, more cab stands, etc.
- Promote the use of clean fuel buses.

Urban Design and Open Space Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- Expand the Central Area's renowned system of public spaces – the lakefront, Michigan Avenue, Wacker Drive and State Street – to encompass the Chicago River and a new system of neighborhood parks and open spaces lined by high-quality streetscapes.
- Develop the Chicago River as Chicago's second premier waterfront, with shared public spaces such as promenades, parks and outdoor cafes, and as a quality address for new commercial and residential development.

  Create high-quality entryways and corridors to heighten the experience of arrival into the Central Area.
- Develop ground floors with transparent faces to maximize the visibility of active uses and to improve the quality of the streetscape.
- Re-connect downtown pedestrian and roadway networks by removing and/or relocating barriers presented by railroads.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Manage the appropriate mix of residential development to promote livability and to avoid land-use conflicts.
- Focus new residential development on strategic renovation and reuse of historic buildings.
- Create parking strategies and identify new locations for non-accessory parking.
- Plan for the preservation of landmark buildings and special character districts.
- Establish specific design and location requirements for new types of parking-dependent retail.

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Extend the concept of "civic realm" to include creative new uses for rail corridors and highway infrastructure, such as decking over the expressways.
- Create new open space along railroad rights-of-way.
- Repair multi-level streets such as east Wacker Drive to improve connections.
- Move railroad staging yards out of the Central Area to create new development and open space opportunities.
- Extend the street grid over the Chicago River south of Congress.
- Redevelop the St. Charles Air Line for new transit, green space, and/or recreational uses.

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List of Illustrations and Sources

Unless noted below, all illustrations and images by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, LLP

Executive Summary

Fig. i	The proposed office core expansion into the West Loop will allow 16,000,000 square feet of new office growth. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Additional renderings in Executive Summary by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Chapter 1

Fig. 1.1	South Michigan Avenue today. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 1.2	South Michigan Avenue will be one of many higher intensity, mixed-use corridors that will extend out from the Loop and form the centers of urban neighborhoods. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 1.3	The Central Area of Chicago. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Development and SOM.
Fig. 1.4	The Central Area makes up 2% of the City of Chicago. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Development and SOM.
Fig.1.5	The Central Area in 2020. Rendering by SOM.
Fig.1.6	Chicago Metropolis 2020 - Community Leaders Scenario for Chicago Region 2030. Illustration by Metropolis 2020.

Additional photographs on pg. 6:
“The Plan of Chicago” Photo by Robert Cameron.
“Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago” Photo by SOM.
“Chicago 21: A Plan for the Central Area Communities” Photo by SOM.
“Chicago Central Area Plan: A Plan for the Heart of the City” Photo by Teng Associates.

Chapter 2

Fig. 2.1	Natural Features ... Lake, River and Land. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 2.2	The Street Grid extending in all directions allows the downtown to be remarkably open and accessible. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 2.3	Typical Block within the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 2.4	The Block Pattern organizes all development. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 2.5	Density and diversity within each block. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 2.6	A tradition of innovative architecture. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.7	Parks and open space. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.8	Great places. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.9	Bascule bridges. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.10	Bascule bridges. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.11	The East Loop and South Loop have seen remarkable changes in recent years. Photo by Panto Ulema.
Fig. 2.12	The Near Northwest offers potential for high density residential neighborhoods and maintained historic industrial areas. Photo by Panto Ulema.
Fig. 2.13	Office Space, Chicago Central Business District, 1950-2020. Illustration by SOM, Arthur Anderson LLP and the Goodman Williams Group.
Fig. 2.14	The Central Area Office Core. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.15	New office buildings are being constructed in the Wacker Drive corridor. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.16	Central Area Residential Development, 1980-2020. Illustration by SOM, Arthur Anderson LLP and the Goodman Williams Group.
Fig. 2.17	Central Station rowhouses. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.18	There was a net increase of 23,000 residential units between 1980 and 2000 in the Central Area. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.19	DePaul University. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.20	The East and South Loop are home to major schools, many of which have renovated older buildings. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.21	River North. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.22	North Michigan Avenue. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.23	State Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.24	The recent expansion of McCormick Place has created a new focal point for the area. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.25	The Field Museum is now part of an integrated museum campus and stronger lakefront park system. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.26	Printing and distribution in the Central Area. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.27	Manufacturing on Goose Island. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 2.28	Commonwealth Edison is engaged in a multibillion dollar upgrade of its Chicago power distribution grid, with emphasis on the Central Area. Illustration by SOM and City of Chicago Department of Environment.
Fig. 2.29	Central Area transit today. Illustration by SOM and City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 2.30-1	The Central Area is served by CTA rail and bus and Metra commuter rail. Photos by SOM.
Fig. 2.32	Opportunities for Development, 2001-2020. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Development and SOM.
Fig. 2.33	The South Loop and the Near South provide great opportunities for future residential and retail developments as well as continued rail oriented uses. Photo by Panto Ulema.
Table 2.1	Historic and Projected Growth, Chicago Central Area, 1980-2020. Illustration by Arthur Anderson LLP.

DRAFT

Table 2.2	Total Central Area Employment, 1972-2020. Illustration by Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.3	Central Area Employment by Market Sector, 1972-2020. Illustration by Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.4	Central Area Office Development, 1950-2020. Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago; Torto Wheaton Research; Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.5	Housing Units and Population, Chicago Central Area, 1970-2020. Illustration by U.S. Bureau of Census, Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.6	Post Secondary School Enrollment. Illustration by Goodman Williams Group and Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table. 2.7	Allocation of Demand by Sector and District. Illustration by SOM, Arthur Anderson LLP and the Goodman Williams Group, and City of Chicago Department of Planning.

Chapter 3

Fig. 3.1	The Cermak Road Corridor today. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 3.2	The Cermak Road Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 3.3	The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 3.4	The proposed West Loop Transportation Center. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 3.5	The North Branch Canal in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Additional photographs on pg 34 by SOM.

Chapter 4

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Fig. 4.1.1	The Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.2	High-Density, Mixed-Use corridors. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.3	Neighborhoods and Special Places. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.4	Landmark and Character Districts. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.5	Industrial Districts and Corridors. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.6	Cultural Attractions and Tourist Destinations. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.7	Education and Learning. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.8a	The Higher-Density Zoning Defines Today's Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.8b	The Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.9	Pedestrians can cross the Expanded Loop in 20 minutes. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.10	The Expanded Loop consists of the West Loop, the Central Loop, the East Loop, and Illinois Center. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.11	High-Density, Mixed-Use Corridors. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.12	Stable, emerging and new neighborhoods in the Central Area with vacant land and underutilized sites. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.13	Neighborhoods and Special Places. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.14	Landmark Buildings and Districts within the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.15	Character Districts within the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.16	Maintain industrial districts and corridors in the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.17	Transit improvements should conveniently tie the tourist destinations together. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.18	A strengthened framework of tourist destinations and visitor districts. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.19	The distribution of Chicago Public School students in the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.20	The Future of Education in the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.21	To ensure sustainable employment growth, the high density office core will expand to the west. Rendering by SOM.

Table 4.1.1	The Chicago Historic Resources Survey. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development.

TRANSPORTATION

Fig. 4.2.1	Promote region-wide transit investments. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.2	Much of the Central Area is within 5 minutes walk of a CTA station. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.3	Preserving rights-of-way is critical to providing new transit services. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.4	Convenient connections between all modes will be required. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.5	Central Area transit improvements will provide improved service to the Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM, DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.6	The future Carroll Avenue Busway. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.7	A new generation of transit vehicles will be on busways that will offer efficient and comfortable transit. Image provided by ACEA - Association des Constructeurs Européens d' Automobiles.
Fig. 4.2.8	The future busway system. Illustration by DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.9	The future East-West Busway - below grade option. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.10	The future East-West Busway - street level option. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.11	The proposed West Loop Transportation Center along Clinton Street between the Ogilvie Transportation Center and Union Station. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.12	CTA Clinton Subway. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.13	The proposed West Loop Transportation Center- A Multi-Modal Facility. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.14	The West Loop Transportation Center- entrance level. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.15	The West Loop Transportation Center- CTA Rail level. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.16	CTA modernizations and enhancements. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.17	Enhanced intermodal bus connections at La Salle Street Station. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.18	Potential New Green Line Rapid Transit Stations may be similar to the new Douglas Blue Line Stations. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.
Fig. 4.2.18	The Metra Electric Randolph Terminal is being reconstructed to provide better passenger service. Illustration by SOM and Image Fiction.
Fig. 4.2.19	The Metra Electric Randolph Terminal is being reconstructed to provide better passenger service to the East Loop, Millenium Park and Illinois Center. Illustration by SOM and Image Fiction.
Fig. 4.2.20	The existing pedway system. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.21	Pedestrian improvements will overcome physical barriers. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.22	Much of the Central Area is walkable. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.23	Much of the Central Area is walkable. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.24	Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with added parking in the Loop. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.25	Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with no parking added in the Loop. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.26	It may be necessary to control the number of parking spaces in the Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.27	The existing and proposed Bicycle Path System. Illustration by SOM, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development and City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.28	The Future water taxi system. Illustration by SOM, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development and City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.29	Bicycling in the Central Area will increase as a viable form of commuting. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.30	Water Taxis on the Chicago River provide convenient access to the West Loop transit stations. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.31	Potential Metra Expansion Projects. Illustration by Metra.
Fig. 4.2.32	Potential CTA Rail Projects Illustration by DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.33	The Midwest Regional High Speed Rail Initiative. Illustration by Midwest High Speed Rail Coalition.
Fig. 4.2.34	Potential Express Rail to O'Hare and Midway Airports. Illustration by DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.35	Trains used in the Midwest High-Speed Rail initiative may be similar to the Acela trains used in the Northeast Corridor System. Illustration by Amtrak.
Fig. 4.2.36	Express Rail Service to the airports will use dedicated train cars with special passenger amenities. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.
Fig. 4.2.37	Transportation Improvements Years 2002-2006. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.
Fig. 4.2.38	Transportation Improvements Years 2007-2011. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.
Fig. 4.2.39	Transportation Improvements Years 2012-2016. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.
Fig. 4.2.40	Transportation Improvements Years 2017-2021. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.

WATERFRONTS AND OPEN SPACES

Fig. 4.3.1	Central Area Open Space Opportunities. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.2	Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's great public space. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.3	Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous park system. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.4	Create the next generation of parks and plazas. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.5	Continue to landscape streets. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.6	Open space systems in the Central Area will form a connected network for residents and visitors.. Illustration by SOM.

DRAFT

Fig. 4.3.7	The lakefront open space system. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.8	Grant Park and Buckingham Fountain. Photograph by Panto Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.9	The Grant Park Master Plan. Illustration by Hargreaves Associates and Chicago Park District.
Fig. 4.3.10	Queen's Landing. Rendering by Christopher Grubbs, Hargreaves Associates and Chicago Park District.
Fig. 4.3.11	Neighborhood Park Area. Rendering by Christopher Grubbs, Hargreaves Associates and Chicago Park District.
Fig. 4.3.12	The McCormick Tribune Ice Rink at Millenium Park. Photograph from Public Building Commission of Chicago (PBC).
Fig. 4.3.13	Outdoor music pavilion and band shell at Millenium Park. Photo of model from PBC.
Fig. 4.3.14	Public fountains at Millenium Park. Rendering from PBC.
Fig. 4.3.15	Michigan Avenue gardens at Millenium Park. Photo from PBC.
Fig. 4.3.16	Concept of Wacker Drive and Monroe Harbor. Rendering by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.17	Burnham Park Framework Plan. Illustration by EDAW.
Fig. 4.3.18	The lakefront path north of Olive Park in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.19	The Lakefront Path today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.20	Chicago's Lakefront Legacy. Rendering by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.21	Shoreline islands form an outer breakwater as well as a natural habitat. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.22	The central lakefront as envisioned by the Plan of Chicago (1909). Illustration by Burnham Associates.
Fig. 4.3.23	The riverfront will become a major new public amenity on a par with the lakefront. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.24	The Main Branch of the Chicago River will be enhanced by a continuous riverwalk and underbridge connections. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.25	Water taxis on the Chicago River. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.26	Erie Terrace Park in River North. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.27	Natural habitat along the Chicago River. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.28	The Riverwalk Gateway under Lake Shore Drive. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.29	The South Branch today. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.30	The South Branch in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.31	The North Branch Canal in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.32	The North Branch Canal today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.33	The Central Area will provide a range of new parks and plazas, serving a variety of needs. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.34	Fort Dearborn Post Office today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.35	Fort Dearborn Park in 2020. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.36	I-94 and Monroe Street in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.37	I-94 and Monroe Street today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.38	The South River Corridor today. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.39	The South River Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.40	Green streets and infrastucture. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.41	North Dearborn Parkway. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.42	State Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.43	Randolph Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.44	Rush Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.45	Green streets and transit provide a 'green' infrastructure. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.46	Street furniture on Dearborn Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.47	Hanging planter in the Loop. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.48	Randolph Street newsrack. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.49	Street signage on Dearborn Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.50	Michigan Avenue at Roosevelt Street in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.51	Michigan Avenue at Roosevelt Street in 2020. Photo by Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.52	The Open Space Framework. Illustration by SOM.
Table 4.3.1	Central Area Open Space Opportunities. Illustration by Chicago Department of Planning and Development.

Chapter 5

Fig. 5.1	Central Area Subareas. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.2	Central Area Subareas. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.3	The Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.4	Adams Street and DesPlaines Street today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.5	Adams Street and Des Plaines Street in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.6	The East Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.7	Proposed improvements to stairs leading to the 'L'. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.8	Existing Wabash Avenue. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.9	Proposed Rebuilding of Wabash Avenue. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.10	Proposed Lakeshore East. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.11	Existing Lakeshore East. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 5.12	The Near North. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.13	The Near North. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.14	The South Loop and Near South. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.15	The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.16	The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor today. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.17	The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.18	The Cermak Road Corridor. Illustration by SOM.

DRAFT

Fig. 5.19	The Cermak Road Corridor today. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.20	The Cermak Road Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.21	The Roosevelt Road Corridor. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.22	Proposed new high density residential neighborhood north of Roosevelt Road and east of the Chicago River. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.23	Proposed new residential neighborhood south of Roosevelt Road along the River
Fig. 5.24	The South River Corridor. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.25	Strategies for Riverfront Open Space. Illustrations by SOM.

Chapter 6

Fig. 6.1	Central Area Skyline. Rendering by SOM.
Fig. 6.2	Conceptual Framework for Zoning in the Central Area. Rendering by SOM.
Table 6.1	Central Area Transportation Projects – Capital Cost by End Date. City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

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